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MARCH ON

By

GEORGE MADDEN MARTIN

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Children in the Mist

A Warwickshire Lad

Emmy Lou's Road to Grace

Selina

These Are Appleton Books

D. APPLETON & COMPANY
Publishers New York

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Mrs. GEORGE (MADDEN) MARTIN

AUTHOR OF

"CHILDREN IN THE MIST," "EMMY LOU'S ROAD TO GRACE," ETC.

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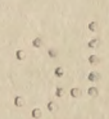

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PART I

"The Past is also Stored in Thee"

MARCH ON

CHAPTER I

STEPHEN JANVIER enjoyed supremely those traits of character which, according to him, distinguished his elders. It did not occur to this lively young Kentuckian that he in his turn might be an out-and-out romantic, insular, colorful, tenacious and—lovable. On a June evening, the summer that Stephen was twenty-seven, he brought up on the threshold of his uncle's parlor.

Parlor! It was this word occurring on his lips that checked him. Late comer as he was, he paused in the doorway and chuckled as, beaming amiably, he gazed about him at the couples and groups within the room; the girls in the all-too-scandalously brief draperies of the moment, the men in blue coats and white flannels.

One of Stephen's generation on a time argued with an elder concerning this word.

"It isn't said any more, parlor, you know; it's obsolete like the thing it stood for."

"But it *is* said; *we* say it."

The older generation spoke according to its nature, expressive of its own individualities, and the point of view instinctive with it, it being nothing of its concern that any creatures else happen not to think with it. And this older stock has had its share in making the

state what it is to-day, for puissant and contumacious tenacity.

The room that Stephen so beamingly surveyed was liberal in its dimensions, ample in its width, and in length twice this width. What that the owner of the house, the uncle of Stephen, had done what he could to modernize this home of his forbears? What that the room rejoiced in shaded electroliers and hardwood floors? In the definitive term of this older stock, it not only was still a parlor, but a *saloon* parlor.

The affair this evening was of that nature called informal by the modern hostess as she gives her invitations over the telephone; an inclusive term in the opinion of these elders, covering all degrees of irregularities and laxities.

"Gross improprieties touching on lawlessness," they were known to say, "which, did *these* occur at Weimar's road house at the crossroads, would be accounted license by the county police."

Weimar no longer ran this road house with its adjoining beer garden and dancing pavilion; these elders in justice to him would add this, claiming that the road house in his time was reputable enough; that he merely owned the property nowadays, and was the lessor. To-day he was a brewer of beer, not a road house dispenser of the beverage, and lived with his two sons and his four daughters in his city home overlooking the park. A tapster by training when he, forty-five years ago and just arrived in America, took service at the road house, to-day he was rated at something over two millions; and his sister Ottille, a tailoress by trade, who came to America from Germany with her brother, to-day was the widow of a prosperous merchant tailor.

It was past eleven o'clock. Isaac Shelby Timmons,

the colored butler, was refilling the punch bowl, which sat amid a mighty company of glasses on a table in the embrasure of a window. This saddle-colored person, portly and urbane, contributed both deportment and decorum to the occasion. The captious might claim that the two others of his race who were present did not. Yet just as Weimar, the brewer, has his part in the events yet to be set down, so the two youths about to be depicted have their place in this story.

Julius Buck and William McKinley Coffin, colored youths of the neighborhood, sat beside a victrola in the hall, plying the instruments of ragtime, snare drum, bass drum, and cymbal. A fiddle in its day, in the hands of some elderly and staid forbear of these youths, some great-mannered old darkey in a swallow-tailed coat, blue with brass buttons, was considered seemly and desirable in this parlor. Whereas *canned music,* punctuated by the tom-tom of drum and cymbal as wielded by Julius and William, was held by those whose memories went back to the former day and its fiddle, to outrage the sense of things decent and fitting. Again Stephen chuckled.

It was past eleven and he, arriving later than he intended, was the more briskly ready for a partner, being as untiring a dancer as any in the room.

An untiring dancer? The best stepper in the crowd if practice makes for perfect. He was pausing in the doorway as couple after couple went by, waiting for that response within himself which, pointing him to his fancy, would speed him to a break-in, and the capture of some other man's choice.

He was a big, upstanding person, his alertness tempered by his easy poise. As standards in his community regarding masculine beauty went, he was no better

looking than he should be, these standards being influenced by a Victorian past, and inclining still to the romantic; whereas the features of Stephen were large, and his cheekbones pronounced.

This young man with the chestnut hair, and eyes of hazel flecked with gray, would have been deemed homely here in his native habitat but for his size, a bodily attribute in the male which in Kentucky frankly is worshiped; his nonflickering gaze, no mean thing itself in his state, and his smile which was ardent, indeed luminous, and according to where bestowed, caressing. Women, certainly Stephen's own womenkind, spoiled him because of this smile.

Charlie, the son of the house and the cousin of Stephen, came by guiding Evelyn, his young wife of a year, the two signaling with eyes and heads to Stephen as they passed, their dumb show at once a welcome, and a reminder to proceed to duty. It was Evelyn who by telephone, had summoned these young people who were here to-night, from town, and the near and far country places.

'Genie Harrison passed, a little person in a blue silk dress, with a rosebud mouth and entirely knowing eyes, dipping and pausing with abruptness in the recovery, as she went by with Bennie Harlan, her partner. 'Genie avowed herself *modern;* defined the term for you if asked so to do; and said she rejoiced in what she was.

Bennie, who was the son of the Presbyterian minister at Ashe, twelve miles across country, stood amazing high on his thin legs. He only lately, since his new job as reporter on an afternoon paper in the city, had taken his place with the crowd, this probably being the first time the youngster had had any money for him-

self. He only recently, too, had been thrown with 'Genie, and it was clear to him who runs that the boy quite tremendously had fallen for her. From his stilt-like eminence above her auburn head, he never took his eyes off her. 'Genie's mother was a Colonial Dame, and her father was a member of The Society of The Cincinnati, a pair who in their persons, as in the performance of their obligations, private and public, carried their credentials.

And their only child, the rejoicing and modern Eugenia? There was no back that one could see to the waist of this person's dress, there was very little front beyond shoulder straps of rosebuds that matched her mouth, and there was nothing to speak of in the way of sides to her skirt. She wore blue silk stockings of high-reaching length, nor dared the fancy surmise how little else. Blunt and plain-spoken young 'un, six years the junior of Stephen!

Emily Gwynne and McHenry Stuart passed. Emily was a beauty of long reign, a contemporary of Stephen. Her frock lacked the rosebuds with which 'Genie eked out the absence of a waist, but her lips were made up like a poppy which better suited her. Dress and lips screamed their modern note, and belied Emily, who was a hark-back. She wasn't clever, and she *was* faithful. McHenry was up to date, and should pick a flapper such as 'Genie, who was on to him!

These girls and these men here to-night, were Stephen's crowd, his set, his associates, and not a few of them, his kindred. Sally Clarke was a cousin, Bettie Craig was another.

And this night in question? His gaze went across the room to an open window. It was June, and it was Kentucky. The night just left behind him, and the

world of varied landscape rolling and extended, were drenched with the scent of the one, and magical beneath a high-riding moon, through the beauty of the other.

His gaze came back from the window and fell upon a girl. She was dancing with Rowan Hart, a youth from out in the state, who had come this past winter to the city to attend the law school.

The girl danced extremely well. There was a composure about her way of doing it, together with an air of entire propriety, which, taking the performance on its achieved results, lent rather than detracted charm. Dancing to a snare drum and cymbal may be lifted, then, to an art?

This amiably beaming Stephen now regarding her, scion of those colorful and puissant sires, was secretly and unalterably fastidious, and knew it. As fastidious in his exacting soul as he in his outward habit was catholic, in general playing so many favorites there was no favorite. This fastidiousness leaped now in exultation to his lips. The American experiment then produces daughters, children of the line, in themselves at once its vindication and its promise? Pearls of price in the shell of its past?

He swore softly at himself for a cad, and forgot it. This girl dancing with young Hart gave him instant joy. For one so young, and the lines of her body were youthfully thin, she was exceedingly distinguished, straight and elegant, her head well-carried, her nose a trifle high-bridged, and her slight shoulders sloping into slight and lovely arms. And for one who, in carriage and manner, was so composed, she had an amazing brilliancy of pulsing color, the crimson that came and went upon her cheeks being as rich and flawless as

it was unusual, a crimson that more often is seen on the firm facial contours of some glowing and proudly handsome child.

Stephen took a breath, a long and oddly deep breath, like a runner stooped and about to leap to his course. He searched his brain as to who this girl might be. Somewhere in his past he knew this cool face, this small, high nose! Ever after he declared that he at this moment, was conscious of a sense of impending happening, of impelling fate, imperative and urging.

There had been affairs in Stephen's time. He was twenty-seven, and preëminently human. Infatuations and episodes characteristic not only of so buoyant a nature, but of youth and nature wherever found, not alone in Jefferson County, Kentucky, but in Kentucky at large, and the round world as well.

These episodes must have scattered from his memory as mists before the morning, since he was saying to himself that here, in the person of this girl, was the apotheosis of proud and lovely woman at last, as he had dreamed of her.

Having avowed this, straightening as he did so, he felt upon him the eyes, accusing and reproachful, of a lady; of his own great-great-grandmother. She who, not so long since renovated and restored with the rest of the old interior about her, looked down out of her carved and gilded frame from above a marble-topped pier-table. A young woman she, with flowing chestnut hair, wearing the bodice, fichu, and long sleeves, associated in the modern mind with the person of Madame Roland.

A *châtain* beauty was this great-great-grandmother of Stephen; her eyes chestnut brown like her hair, which fell, loosely curling, upon her white neck and bosom,

with heavy and lustrous undulations; her countenance a little round; an angel face in which sweetness near to poignancy, was allied to mischief; with lips on which laughter played archly and easily; and a glance which sparkled with life and intelligence.

The daughter of a well-to-do *avocat* of Marseilles, a refugee from the Paris of the revolution to the young republic of America, she was the first mistress of this house, the early arbiter of the destinies of this room, and the lady for whom her own great-great-grandson in the tender years of his boyhood, cherished a secret and burningly romantic passion.

Stealing into this room, it was his grandfather's house in those days, and sitting huddled, hands clasping his boyish ankles, on the thick pile of the gayly flowered Victorian carpet, amid Victorian rosewood furniture, a little lad in knickerbockers, belted jacket, and broad, round linen collar, he gazed up at his great-great-grandmother, filled with a worshiping ardor, and the glamour of the traditions surrounding her.

Not willingly does the past surrender us, if indeed it ever does! Already it was astir, alert to measure its strength with this cool girl of Stephen Janvier's own day, who in fancy already had intrigued him.

A hand fell on the young man's shoulder, and a voice making itself heard above the beat of the drum and cymbal addressed him.

"Well, Stevie!"

CHAPTER II

STEPHEN faced about in the doorway to confront the long nose, and the spare person of Colonel Tecumseh Craig. Behind this tall, lean figure stood the Colonel's host, Mr. Stephen Janvier, the uncle of Stephen.

"Well, my boy, here at last, are you?"

The greeting this time came from Stephen's uncle, his voice pitched to surmount the din. The nephew gathered the two were come from the library across the hall, that conceded retreat for the men of the Janvier household; a room so-called from the force of custom and long habit. The Janviers, past and present, were not students, or great readers.

The Colonel who for three score, ten, and six years, had felicitated himself that he was a Kentuckian, wore a suit of white linen which flapped loosely and, as it were, belligerently on his person, and—a highly characteristic touch—a rose adorned his buttonhole.

Mr. Janvier, less a bristling personality than the older man, by comparison was short, and inclined to portliness. Smooth-shaven, his clipped black hair touched on the temples with gray, and wearing white flannels and white shoes, he radiated content and well-being.

Two other voices addressing Stephen, this time feminine voices, lifted themselves.

"Well, Stevie, good evening."

"Well, my son."

The young man swept about, facing the parlor again, this time to greet his aunt and his mother who, by a succession of tackings from point to point about the room, following a margin of safety close to the walls, had reached this momentary haven.

Mrs. Stephen Janvier, a dark-eyed and vivacious matron, wore a brown tulle evening dress come through the season past the worse for wear, and in consequence easy to the mind and body alike, as she would tell you. Her bare shoulders were youthful-looking beneath a tulle scarf, the same frankly worn to conceal certain wreckage in the body of the dress, and her face was delicately irregular, with fine dark brows, one slightly and quizzically higher than the other. She was a Mississippian, born in Vicksburg during Farragut's bombardment of that city, and was fifty-one years old or young, as one took it, and her.

Helen Janvier, the widowed mother of Stephen, was fair-haired and comely, her gown of mauve chiffon as free from reproach as that of her sister-in-law was shabby. She was a Virginian, and a kinswoman of Colonel Craig.

Julius Buck and William Coffin who, in view of an approaching and triumphant climax, to their drums and cymbal had added bones and a triangle, here ceased so suddenly as to leave the eardrums aching with the silence. A glance toward these youths seated in the hall near the stairway showed them wiping their faces and mopping the backs of their necks. Julius was saddle-colored, and William was a rich shade of brown.

Mrs. Stephen Janvier took advantage of the lull to address Colonel Craig.

"Well, Colonel Te, I've secured what I told you at

dinner I meant to have before the evening was over. Mrs. Wing's granddaughter has agreed to serve with me the day after to-morrow as my assistant at the polls in the school commission primary."

Stephen stared at Anne Janvier. He had the information now that he desired.

"Thank you ever so much," he murmured beneath his breath, turning as he did so, and in the light of his aunt's remark, viewing again the girl with young Hart.

The dancers, brought to a halt by the defection of Julius and William, were refusing to abide by it, breaking into a storm of handclaps, jeers, and excitations; not a few feet, these feminine more often than masculine, clacking and tapping upon the polished floor.

Stephen sought, found, and with yet keener interest gazed at the granddaughter of old Mrs. Lucy Wing. To be sure he knew this profile, clean-cut, and almost too self-sufficient. Something like fourteen years rolled back:

A small girl in a velvet bonnet and velvet cloak gazed at him from large black eyes, an immense doll held close to her person behind a muff of white fur. She must have been about six years old. Impeccable from her boots of white kid to her curls, shining and irreproachable, and enthroned in a certain austere but familiar room, upon a straight chair, its wooden seat hard and unrelenting, the boy of fourteen at whom she gazed had laughed in spite of himself, at the cool little creature, and her haughty small nose.

He saw her eight years later. Returning home from college for the Christmas vacation, he was taken by his mother to call on Mrs. Wing, who was spending the winter in town. Young persons in his city, and by inheritance of a certain social standing, on reaching a

suitable age, invariably were taken to call on this person.

During the visit, the granddaughter had burst into the room, a school girl in her teens, suggesting as she came toward the group some glowingly painted figure which seems to rush forward from the canvas; a young creature with radiantly crimson cheeks, and ebon hair, shoulder-long, and loose about her neck. At sight of the callers, and succeeding a brief presentation of herself to the visitors by her grandmother, she had retreated with great propriety, she and her haughty nose.

This nose had challenged from the start. Stephen swore softly to himself that it had. The reference just made by his aunt to the polls and the primary, suggesting as it did that the granddaughter of Mrs. Wing might be brainy and fussed with ideas, might be possessed of that too possible blight to human felicity, an intellect; this reference with its attendant alarms was lost sight of in the superior challenge of the nose.

The clamor of jeers and excitations within the parlor grew. Julius and William, exponents to the limits of their abilities of a people's soul expressed in noise, put away their handkerchiefs, and prepared to resume their activities. Grapevine intelligence conveying this fact from the hall to the parlor, the clamor of dissatisfaction ceased, an ecstatic hooting of approval replacing it, the while the dancers made ready, the flushed Corybants of the one sex, already stepped within the arms of the other.

Julius and William burst forth with vigor, offering this time a one-step, "Dance with Everybody but Your Wife," played with undiminished fervor and ticklish variations which got next to you, certain of the Corybants in the parlor, snapping their fingers, and sway-

ing with their hips as they and their partners moved off.

A jubilant male, catching fire from the other sex, lifted a tenor voice in a high and sweet falsetto as he stepped out, carrying above the orchestration, the air and words of this evidently favorite gem, other voices taking up the suggestion, and supporting the singer with a wordless and droning accompaniment.

Bennie Harlan and Rowan Hart had exchanged partners, Rowan appropriating 'Genie, and Bennie moving off with his arm about the granddaughter of Mrs. Wing. The cheek of the cub on his stiltlike high legs, with his yellow hair slicked back from an ingenuous brow, the nerve of his arm, moving off with *her!*

Colonel Tecumseh Craig was addressing Stephen. But what of that, since Stephen, despite his bodily conjunction, in intent and spirit was elsewhere?

It was Colonel Te's characteristic to be talking; to talk on; and still on; dwelling upon a day when the sun shone brighter than in this second decade of the twentieth century; when the women of his state, and of his section of the republic, were more beautiful, more womanly, more admirable, and more seemly; and the men unashamedly, and by creed and custom, were courtly and chivalric.

Stephen took delight in these idiosyncrasies of his elders. But not at this moment. Right now he was the stern and absorbed spectator, silent and intent, of Bennie Harlan and his movements; permitting this youth who had guided his lady out upon the floor, to slip into the alternate swing and halt of the measure; then himself departing in the middle of a peroration from the Colonel, striding boldly out between the couples, and making his way across the room.

The group left behind thus abruptly, startled by the

impetuosity of the young man's plunge, showed amusement as they watched him. A ship in full career he suggested, according to Mrs. Stephen Janvier, sails filled, and pennants streaming.

Bearing down he touched Bennie Harlan on his serge-clad shoulder. As this person turned his head to discover the source of the interruption, his limpidly blue young eyes interrogative beneath the correspondingly youthful brow, Stephen halted, and opened his arms.

The four elders, watching from the doorway, ever after were ready to take oath that he did this thing. Opened his arms to the girl, as the neophite his lips to the milk and honey, the gifts of God's grace, as Colonel Te phrased it later. And that old Lucy Wing's granddaughter, after a look into his face, came into them.

* * * * * *

MRS. STEPHEN JANVIER *(dryly)*.—Stephen generally knows what he wants. I didn't suppose he'd had time since he came into the house, ten minutes ago, to discover her.

MR. STEPHEN JANVIER.—Stephen always knows what he wants. He knew what he wanted when he defied the family precedents, Washington and Lee, and the University of Virginia, and announced that for him it was Harvard.

MRS. STEPHEN JANVIER.—He knew from the start that he meant to follow the family calling, and enter the family law firm with you and Charlie. Helen, speak up. This family paragon after all, is your cygnet, not mine and Stephen's.

HELEN JANVIER *(smiling)*.—Why should I, so long as others will?

COLONEL CRAIG *(addressing the head of the family law firm)*.—How's he doing?

MR. STEPHEN JANVIER.—I'm satisfied. So is Charlie. Stephen thinks clearly, and is a hard worker. I left him at the office to-night, finishing some papers promised for to-morrow morning. Weimar, the brewer, is incorporating his various enterprises under one management, looking to his withdrawal as the active head. Stephen with some suggestions from Charlie, and occasional counsel with me, has handled the matter.

COLONEL TE *(severely)*.—Sound?

MRS. STEPHEN JANVIER *(smiling)*.—In these days of changing winds within the parties, Colonel, what does even so fierce a democrat as you mean by *sound?*

MR. STEPHEN JANVIER *(himself commonly associated in the public mind with that small group of men who standing behind the machine, controlled the state)*.—I think I may say so. What I may define as Stephen's devouring curiosity, inclines him at times to take up with questionable associates, and to run after strange gods.

Julius and William here came again to a triumphant close, stopping with a finality which this time carried conviction to the parlor, the young people coming to a halt, and with feminine chatter and feminine laughter, trooping out to the porch, some by way of the long open windows, others through the doorway, past the older people.

'Genie, the modernist, came by with young Hart. Eugenia loved the Colonel. Nevertheless as she reached her old friend, she gave a dip with her knee,

and a flirt of her body, with an eye for the effect of this upon him, whereby her emphatically modern skirt, slashed as this was on each side, parted. Heavens, what a show of *modern* leg! After which she tripped on, with a backward gleeful glance as she went, giving a frank if prudent hitch to her rosebud straps, which persistently threatened to slip from her shoulders.

Mrs. Stephen Janvier was no better than she should be. She sought to rally Colonel Tecumseh. Mr. Janvier dropped his eyeglasses on their ribbon. He had been regarding the granddaughter of Mrs. Wing, who at this moment, in the company of his nephew, was disappearing through a long window of the parlor, on to the porch.

"Too bad of 'Genie, now admit it, Colonel Te. She intended to shock us, of course. Even so, it cannot but make the judicious grieve." This from Anne Janvier, who never was judicious in her life!

Colonel Craig exploded. Kentuckians of his day and type, those to the manner born, have a habit of mind, a manner of spirit, a deportment of soul, as of person. With these there is a fashion of greeting a friend, of acknowledging an acquaintance, of surveying an enemy; a manner of wearing a coat, of entering the club, of coming into church, of proceeding down the aisle at the theater. With such as he, there is a proscribed phraseology, an accepted violence of expression, as vent to indignation.

" 'Grieve,' did you say, Anne? Grieve? It is so repugnant to my soul to see Kentucky's daughters as I behold them here to-night, as I see them elsewhere as I go about, tricked out like courtesans and Delilahs, I could wish my time were come to turn my back upon my world, and go. They jig, they amble, as the poet says,

and nickname God's creature, woman, and make their wantonness her shame. Little Eugenia Harrison who just passed us is the scion of a god-fearing grandmother, and of a grandfather whose political faith I never had cause to question. And now, egad, yes, I'll say it, a family reputation a century good, damned with the granddaughter's every mincing dip."

His groan was very real. "By gad, Anne, and you, Helen, is that stamp and hall-mark which to the world meant 'Southern,' to vanish from the earth? Is that South to be no more, which has performed the functions of an aristocracy, a class and grade as necessary to society as a proletariat? That South which, throughout its history, has maintained standards, and insisted on values, producing gentlemen and gentlewomen, rather than men and women? I ask you, whose sex is responsible for these things in our country, since women here in America determine the social habit? What has brought about this collapse in taste? What has conduced to this lowering of our standards? If the South, through the laxity of you women, has lost these things, it has lost that through which it, as an asset, was most of value to the republic."

He turned abruptly, and started for the stairway. Emily Gwynne was coming down the steps, and he went to meet her. Motherless since her childhood, living with her father, Grayson Gwynne, always a bit from hand to mouth, now at a hotel, and again boarding, Colonel Tecumseh, from her earliest years, had been to her that institutional person, the bachelor family friend. As she stepped to the floor, he took her hand and drew it through his arm. He was fond of Emily, fiercely fond if it came as he now believed it, to a crisis.

McHenry Stuart was tiring of his affair with Emily.

These things are regrettable, but will happen. Colonel Te looked to Emily to release McHenry. He winced for her that she already had not done so. He spoke to her now tenderly.

"What does one say to his lady at a tom-tom ball, my dear? A ragtime *dansant?* Does one talk conventions suited to the nature of the performance, and suggest that, in the words of the music-hall ditty, *'another little drink won't do us any harm'?* Or may Age follow its own phraseology, and propose that we sample Isaac's bowl of punch?"

The perfectly chiseled nostrils of the girl on the arm of the Colonel quivered. She was piteously simple, and she at no time, was vocal. She wanted to say that in substance to her old friend, which she did not know how to say in words.

She wanted to tell Colonel Te, that his creed, according to himself, was to believe in the ladies; a tenet in these articles of his faith being the exaltation of woman. She wanted to tell him more.

She probably never heard the term, sex-solidarity, and would not have understood it if she had. Feminism, the word of the hour, for her had little meaning. But she was of her day.

The enormity of her offending was that McHenry had asked for her affection; and she had given it. Whatever her times of piteous suffering since, however imprudent she was, and at times desperate, she was conscious that in this measuring of wills, hers against his, *these girls* here to-night, the most of whom were her juniors, were with *her.* She was aware that in *her,* these younger girls saw, not the struggle of one woman against one man, but the struggle of Woman!

She was of her day, and in her groping way, she

read a meaning in these present-day manifestations of her sex that so distressed and so appalled the Colonel. The code for women hitherto was imposed; it was not of women's making. If in the revolt of to-day, some of these girls, such as 'Genie, went too far, it was because, in their opinion, the tonic quality of honest immodesty is preferred to the poison of hypocrisy.

In her own inarticulate way, Emily sensed this. Because she loved Colonel Te, because she could not make him see her side of all this, because she never would be able to make him see, her eyes as she spoke, filled slowly.

"Colonel Te, dear Colonel Te, I tell you, you're wrong. You and father always have been wrong. And McHenry's wrong. Your day, and father's day, were cruel to women; and McHenry would keep it so. Colonel Te, darling Colonel Te, you make it *hard!* You put *me,* and not McHenry, in the wrong; you put *women* in the wrong! And father always has!"

Colonel Tecumseh, patting the hand of Emily as it lay on his arm, was incalculably tall, thin, bony, violent and lovable; with a nose so long that it drooped at the end as from its own weight. He wore mustaches, these being iron-gray, and a bit ragged, and twisted, poor things, by a lean hand that never let them be in peace. The champion of woman, as he supposed, and fiercely and hotly her defender, he never was to see that a creed of yesterday, imposed upon to-day, can lead to tragic error. And this he was not to see, because he was to be protected from a knowledge that would come too late, by Emily herself, who through him, was its victim.

CHAPTER III

WHEN Stephen crossed the room and tapped Bennie Harlan on the shoulder, Lucy Wing gave the newcomer a swift glance, exhibiting signs of pleasure, her eyebrows arching, and her eyes smiling recognition. She came alike to the point and into his arms, being by nature matter-of-fact.

"It *is* Stephen? Warrington Adams said we would find you and your mother at home this summer."

"As surely as it is Lucy. No one told me that you and Mrs. Wing were back. Warrington hasn't mentioned in any letter that you were coming home."

"Grandmother is tired at last. She says she's made wanderers of herself and me long enough, and is come to stay."

And this was Stephen? Stephen Janvier? Lucy was saying this to herself. This big and radiant young man in white flannels and a blue coat, whose *penchant* in life would seem to be for one-stepping, so blissful his devotion, and so consummate his skill.

"No break-ins on this, my son," he was saying to a youth who at this moment touched him on the shoulder.

Warrington Adams, the friend of both, had given Lucy an idea altogether different. Warrington dwelt not at all upon his friend's most passionate skill at one-stepping; speaking of his amazing eager brain; and of this brain's ravenous and outstanding capacity to absorb and retain; telling of feats in mental prowess put

over during the college days of the two, by this hot-blooded young southerner; and alluding to this young man's quite definite aims, and clearly conceived ambitions.

Out of these characteristics as given her from time to time by Warrington, Lucy had built a personality. Severe nymph with the appraising eyes, she at this time of her life was impatient of commonplace people, and more than hard upon the average person of her day and hour. That Stephen derived an actual hilarity from his ragtiming, that the abounding physical presence of him breathed gusto and delight, found her a trifle outraged, and therefore irritated.

His hand, it was a big and a dexterous hand, was outstretched flat against the girl's body. Impelling her out of the path of a too riotously swaying bacchante and the bacchante's partner, it touched her bare shoulder.

Not every man or woman can say of himself or herself, this or that thing began with me, at this or that moment. A shiver ran over Lucy. It left her shaken, and it left her stunned.

What was this happening to her? For the girl was cruelly honest with herself, being reared by old Mrs. Wing, that fierce modernist, to regard life starkly as to facts, and having few illusions, and no self-delusions. What was this, the first intimation with her in her hitherto sufficient life, that woman may not be supremely the mistress of her soul?

Lucy Wing was a young person of strong characteristics, predilections, and biases. She came through one line of descent, that of her grandmother, of a dry and matter-of-fact stock; through another, the Wings, of a proud and melancholy people. Lacking nothing from

any source derived of courage in her make-up, she took a full look at Stephen here, glancing up at her companion, who was carrying her about the room so absorbedly, and so well.

As she examined the big features, she saw that the young man's face suddenly become stern and tense, was shot through as by an inner light, and that his eyes looking levelly ahead of him from underneath the heavy brows were irradiated. And as definitely as though this Stephen Janvier had told her in words, she gathered that whatever at base was the explanation of that wave of shivering emotion that had so stunned her, he and she shared in common, the experience.

A white shaft of fear crossed alike her consciousness and her face. Her foot in its satin slipper for the moment lost its cunning; and but for the instant response from her companion, she would have stumbled. Recovering herself outwardly at least, she found that she in this interval had been taken possession of by Stephen, who carried her along skillfully and surely.

Why this confused and profound emotion! This sense of strange joy, and inexplicable well-being! Why this vivification come upon a commonplace affair filling a summer evening! The girl asking herself these questions, struggled against a sense of the increasing obsession. She was no sickly fancied, because inexperienced, young person, no gauche schoolgirl in the sentimental throes of first youth.

The music stopped, and her companion brought up on the instant, and released her.

This young man's grandfather at a corresponding age, in the *beau monde* of his antebellum setting, had been a buck of bucks; his father when a young man at college, and even after, was disposed to dandyism and

fashion; Stephen at twenty-seven, reflective of his day, in the stead of any mode, conveyed the impression of excellent and blunt good sense and good humor. He might be said to carry his recommendation in his beaming countenance. He bent this countenance upon Lucy.

"And now for the porch, shall we? And a homey talk, as my aunt would say? Think of the arrears that I, defrauded through no fault of mine, surely am to be allowed to make up! And consider my sense of injury toward Warrington, who is so far ahead of me!"

And Stephen still with his gaze on her, swept her with something wonderful in the way of smiles.

She smiled herself at this, going with his mood a little way. A friendliness was upon her, a pleasing ease and naturalness were with her. She of the oftentimes too rigid carriage of the spirit was penetrated with a sense of imminent adventuring; and also she was profoundly and astonishingly happy. She had yet to suspect, and suspecting, arm herself to meet the astuteness with which this Stephen, through insight and understanding of his fellow creatures, won them to his wishes. She had yet to learn that this young man, who here was speaking again, had a way!

"How about the porch? Shall we?"

"I try to do my duty when I'm made to see it."

He stole at her a newly-appraising glance, her face with its every contour, and its every feature, gathered up in his consciousness; the hair dressed with an art and a sophisticated skill; the fine line of the brows; the discomforting thin proud nose. A shadowy humor trembled at the corner of her mouth, a connection, though far removed, of the house of laughter.

That something then of grace and variety was in her, which makes women agreeable. She had received

from heaven a ready and an ingenious spirit. And Stephen had suspected her of an intellect only!

Warrington Adams was to blame for this. Warrington in speaking of her, stressed cleverness, leading Stephen to see her the center as it were of a mental nimbus, the high-brow offspring of her lively-witted and caustic old grandmother.

That Warrington in the scheme of things, in this earthly Eden for souls, called life, should stress brains! Stephen yet would show him those things in the human experience that incalculably are greater!

The two, the upstanding young man, and the girl in the modish dress of white taffeta, were standing before a long window of the room. The wire screens were unlatched, and like the casements, were stretched wide. On the porch beyond, couples already retreated, were strolling.

Stephen took Lucy's hand. She was no novice. She was beautiful at sixteen, and men being men the world over in their susceptibility to that in woman which pleases the eye, she learned early how to take care of herself. But now as this young man took her hand to lead her across the level sill, her heart raced fast, and she rejoiced in it.

This she told herself, was wrong. And saying so, found herself dwelling the rather upon the fact, and this with the astonishment of discovery, that joy is such a beautiful and such a tempting thing!

Led thus by Stephen, she stepped out upon the porch, to be met by such a splendor of moonlight as she had seldom seen, going across the wide floor with her companion to the railing.

This baluster was of iron, and was old, like the house. Standing here at the rail beside Stephen, again

the girl was strongly agitated. Why this renewed swift racing of her heart? Why this unfamiliar languor creeping upon her senses?

The dozen orange-hued paper lanterns, strung overhead between the pillars of the veranda, swayed in the night wind. And a rose vine which climbed the railing, over-wooded as this climber was, and in need of the pruner's hand, starred the night with here and there a vigorous-stemmed blossom, pallid in the glow of a swaying paper globe.

In actual fact these roses were yellow with, at the moment of their opening, quite passionate salmon centers. Stephen, who was a definite person, had brought Lucy to this exact point along the railing, because she was Mrs. Wing's granddaughter, and because he in this connection had a use by and by for one of these blossoms.

A lawn of wide acreage, and of open spaces, stretched in front of the house. It was inundated with radiance, the near and far masses of the trees and shrubberies, and the distant line of the defining hedge, black upon it.

The cheep of an insect in the grass ten feet below the railing came up to the porch. Here at hand a huge beetle, revealed by the lantern glow, blundered heavily to and fro. A small, dusky body, shapely and elegant, seen clean-cut and compact against the sky, poised rigid upon the exact tip of a spruce tree to the right of the driveway that swept in front of the house, a creature smaller than a big man's hand; and with no warning, the mocking bird outpoured the enchantment of ecstatic song into the silver cup of the night.

And this night upon which these two gazed! Stephen knew no more shame at stark and honest ex-

pression, than did those Elizabethans whom he best understood of the poets, dead and living; the night, so he told himself, like the girl at whom he here stole another look, had the face of Juliet, calling to love and passion.

And the moon which high overhead outpoured a silent flood of splendor from heaven to earth! Stephen again with a glance at the girl beside him, admitted it; the moon to which the cleanly-cut features of Lucy now were lifted, had the face of her for whom Endymion sighed but did not attain, Diana, lovely, remote, and coldly serene.

Stephen had definite business. "Tell me, Lucy, how *is* your grandmother?"

"Grandmother had a birthday, her eighty-eighth, two weeks ago, the day after we arrived at home. She celebrated it by writing a communication to one of the local newspapers. It was double-barreled, and probably the sharper put, because due to her absence, its columns so long had been rid of her. She attacked her old friend, the editor, on two issues, the continued stand of his paper against suffrage for us women, and its policy of intervention in Mexico by the United States. I may say that grandmother is *very* well."

"An amazing person." Stephen's tones were perhaps too musing and reflective. "Warrington Adams chuckles over the caustic penetration of her when she is moved to retrospect. Would you say, now, that she is as apt at foresight?"

"That depends."

Lucy was looking at her companion. There *was* more then to this young man than appeared? Else why this sense with her of pitfalls, cautioning her to move warily?

"The last time I talked with Mrs. Wing is six years ago. I was calling with my mother, and on that occasion, and for a moment only, saw you."

Lucy nodded. She remembered him; a sophomoric young gentleman with a superabundance of manner, and rosy about the gills. It was with her that she, the schoolgirl, jealous of her years and her prerogatives, had resented the manner.

"Your grandmother gave me a hand in welcome, looking me over with shrewd eyes. Something of a gaze, that of Mrs. Wing, wouldn't you say?"

"Grandmother has a reputation of long standing for successfully seeing through people."

"I'm glad, more glad than I'm willing right now to say, that you feel so. This is what Mrs. Wing, on that occasion, said to me:

" 'Heart-whole thus far, I see, young man. For a Janvier you're slow falling for the great madness we call love. There are two varieties with you Janviers, and I know both types. You being of the pattern I may claim to know best, when the great moment comes for you, it will be the cataclysm.' "

Stephen had squared about, and here looked full at Lucy. His voice was uncertain as from a suddenly constricted throat, but this disqualification did not keep out of it an exultant note as of sheer joy.

She looked back at him, gaze for gaze, as straight and full as he. Warrington, her friend, and there were few whom she sooner would trust, was the guarantor for the quality of this young man.

He met the look. The light above their heads brought out for Lucy her companion's figure and face; an alert figure; an alive face; eyes a bit far-set.

Beneath the gaze of these eyes meeting and holding

hers, she felt her own dilating. A second, and she was free. Her heart beat violently.

Lucy, the child of perpetual long wanderings, this young globe-trotter with already behind her a variety of stabilizing experience, struggled to be matter-of-fact; thinking to treat the moment with an off-handedness calculated to be salutary, and withal dryly.

"And I am expected to do what? Confess myself interested in my grandmother's prognostications?"

"God bless you, yes." Stephen's joy was superb, and his face irradiated. He took a step toward her, with both hands out.

Unprepared for so dynamic a response, Lucy retreated, and stood still, finding herself caught and held by rose briers which threatened not alone her arms and shoulders, but—and she was a practical young person—her gown!

She looked at the young man helplessly; she wanted to laugh; she wanted to frown; she wanted to tell him what she thought of him.

He came to her aid humbly. Having set her free, releasing her dress thorn by thorn, he turned to the source of the secondary offending, the rose vine. And still with his air of humble doggedness, he searched for, and finally settled upon a blossom, selecting one marked with such vigor and perfection as the offering presented. Whatever there was of assumed exaggeration in his manner, the girl saw that the otherwise competent hands of this astounding young man were trembling.

Having chosen his rose and broken it from the parent stem, he laid it on a porch table at hand.

"I won't trespass further on your kindness now. By and by, when you're leaving, if I bring my flower to

your car, perhaps you'll act as emissary for me?"

"Emissary?" She found herself taking the cue from him, the aggressor and offender, the should-be repentant and apologist.

"The rose is for your grandmother, if you will give it to her, as coming from me. Mentioning also, if you will be so kind, that the stock from which I broke it, rooted so long ago in the soil of the Janviers, still flourishes. Oh—," and this was spoken cheerfully, as though the speaker become briskly spirited again, had recovered his aplomb, "you can leave it to Mrs. Wing to understand. Saying if you will, that with her permission, Stephen Janvier will be over to call on her to-morrow afternoon, and confess to the cataclysm she predicted."

* * * * * *

Three times Bennie Harlan came out on the porch looking for Lucy, all but herself and Stephen having long gone in. And three times he, after standing afar off indeterminate on his tall young legs, turned back.

He had come from Ashe this evening with Lucy in her car. And being every inch of him, a manly and cheerful-hearted stripling, the blood running so boundingly in his veins, passed on to him by always decent gentlemen and gentlewomen, he reckoned it his part to keep an eye on Lucy's needs, and himself ready for her convenience.

The fourth time, seeing the pair coming forward along the porch toward the doorway, he went to meet them.

CHAPTER IV

LUCY, on coming into the house, declared her intention of joining her old friend, Colonel Tecumseh Craig, where he sat in the hall, favored with a small table for his greater comfort, discussing his supper.

He arose as she came toward him, amazing tall in his loose clothes. Having fetched a second chair, and seated her, he resumed his place, his face with its incredible length of nose, bent toward her with deference and solicitude.

Beloved of the clubs, vociferously welcomed at the card tables, both poker and bridge, known at every private home of consequence in town, and also at every café bar, and by every taxi-driver and cabman, Colonel Tecumseh was understood in a moment of expansion to have asserted to a group of fellow clubmen that he never had been really drunk in his life, but that in his recollection, neither had he ever been entirely sober.

An excellent mixer, sought after as a dinner-table guest by hostesses old and young, he was a person of birth and breeding. A cavalry officer in the Confederate army at twenty-one; a colonel at twenty-four, for forty-nine years he had been returned by his friends and upholders within his party to the legislature at Frankfort. There as in every other relation in life, he was ever a storm center, inviting and returning alike heated and bitter invective on all and any subject, re-

gardless of its triviality, or its importance. As lovable as belligerent, confusing prejudice with principle, always and fiercely the gentleman according to his understanding of the term, he in his city, and his state was among the last of his kind and his day.

With the serving of Isaac's buffet supper, he had sunk from a state of expectancy mildly hopeful to one of melancholy and dejection. To his mind, a salad, a sandwich, and a cup of coffee, followed by an ice, the modern substitution for a supper, as refreshment for the human body, is meager. Colonel Tecumseh was a deeply concerned and a constant good liver, and as the evening rounded to midnight, loved, say, a lobster, followed by, say again, a sweetbread with mushrooms, savory and velvet-smooth in a chafing dish above its blue flame, together with a glass of something to grace the discussing.

In his day the guests at an evening entertainment sat down seriously to a matter of supper, seeing before them three sizes at least in wineglasses, and one of these for champagne; the palate prepared to start in with relishes and oysters, and by way of old ham and jellied chicken with embellishments, succeeded by a patë, emerge to a choice in a syllabub, a wine jelly, or a nesselrode.

Welcoming the distraction from his dissatisfaction, in the person of this dark-eyed and lovely granddaughter of Mrs. Wing, his faded blue eyes gazed upon her with evident and genuine pleasure.

He had seen her since her recent return, having been out to Ashe by invitation to welcome his old friend, her grandmother, and to dine.

There was directness in the question that Lucy here put to him. "Colonel Te, is there anything that con-

nects grandmother with the Janviers? Anything in such a connection about, say, a rose, in bloom right now on the railing of the porch?"

The Colonel's lean fingers strayed to his mustaches. Beauty, young and glowing, beauty hanging as now, on the awaited word, inevitably will stir the male heart, whether at seven, seventeen, or seventy. Colonel Tecumseh rated the annals of times gone by as heritages, entrusted to survivors here and there such as himself, to be redistributed to the young people of to-day, the heirs. An opportunity such as this offering, in ordinary would have delighted him. That he should be deterred through any scruple was for him indeed unfortunate.

Modern youth is less ingenuous than its elders. "There *is* such a connection then, Colonel Te?"

Colonel Craig cleared his voice, threw forward his chest, let his dubious eyes wander about the hallway, and back to his attentive and charming vis-à-vis; hesitated; and like his forbear, Adam, before him, fell. In his defense let it be said that he did not recognize his friend, Mrs. Lucy Wing, and this to her face as often as otherwise, as in any particular whatever reflective of his or her day's code; accounting her as one to whose every attitude in life, and every opinion, he had been, was, and would continue to be, opposed!

"There is such a connection, my dear."

"And of what nature?"

"A connection that in its day stood for a more than lively rumpus in this community."

"Go on, Colonel Te."

"On the whole, I think I will, my dear."

The brown fingers of the indeterminate Colonel teased the mustaches, stroking them as ferociously as

if they and not that doughty octogenarian, Mrs. Wing, were the cause of his perturbation.

"Said I to your grandmother the other night at Ashe, 'I'll tell Lucy myself, by the old Harry, I will, if as you say you mean to do, you send her over to this dance at the Janviers, virtually self-invited.' 'Tell her, by your ancient Harry, and then go to him,' said she to me. 'By gad, and I will,' said I."

Lucy nodded. "Grandmother told me as I started to-night, that you, if here, would have some dug-up, old-man tale, as she impolitely put it, to tell me. She said I was to give you her permission, and say that she'll regard it as a kindness, saving her the energy."

"*She* told *you* to say this to *me?*"

"Just this, Colonel Te."

"I thought to force her hand, and like her impudence, she's forced mine. But I'll do it."

Yet again he refrained, pushing away with his coffee cup, what he called the cold insult to an intelligent stomach, an iced salad at midnight. If old Lucy Wing *desired* him to tell Lucy this story, it was for purposes of her own, purposes that he on principle distrusted, and, by gad, he'd *not* do it!

But he did.

"Go on, *dear* Colonel Te."

Not for the price of his immortal soul, would Colonel Tecumseh smoke in the presence of ladies. In the absence of this resource and solace, he reached out, picked up, and played with his coffee spoon.

"The minds of the old, my dear, delight in their own perspicacities. No doubt, *desire,* that greatest of romancers, contributes much of what we in our memories, like to believe, is *tradition.* When I was a little lad, and your grandmother was a young woman of parts,

many of our elders were given to a passion for rose culture, having the out-door tastes characteristic at that time with every southern gentleman and gentlewoman. My own mother was of these, and Stephen Janvier, *père,* as he was called to distinguish him in the family group, was another. He hangs yonder in the library, a scarlet-jowled person in a high stock, wearing a beaver hat.

"Florists as we know these to-day, and nurseries filled with every want and need of the purchaser, then were unknown in Kentucky. And the rose lovers of the state, from Lexington and Frankfort, to Louisville, exchanged cuttings as well as experience; experimenting as they were, for varieties."

Colonel Tecumseh straightened, sitting tall and spare across from Lucy, with her bare white shoulders, and her raven hair.

"My mother, as I said, was such a rose fancier, and I to the day I lost her at past fifty, was her devoted and not unskilled assistant. I have it in my mind that most of the hardy roses in the gardens of our locality at that time came from stock ordered from overseas by the Janvier family, who lived then as now at this place; and I know that our best native roses of this section to this day, have Bourbon and Provence strains."

"And where does grandmother come into this, Colonel Te?"

"We are getting to it. I was a boy, as I said, when these things occurred that I tell. This Stephen Janvier, *père,* the really supreme rose faddist of the region, experimenting with a native wild stock, a climber known as the prairie rose, crossed with a French standard, produced an amazing, vigorous pillar rose, its foliage lustrous and dark-green, the flowers pinkish-yellow,

their centers tinged with salmon, a free bloomer, my dear, and fragrant."

Colonel Te was lost apparently in an inner ecstasy at recall of this paragon of blooms. Coming back to the present, he tweaked his nose.

"Young and old, in that day we were romantic, Lucy, and not ashamed to be. This rose was named by Stephen Janvier, *père,* the *Lucy Routt,* in honor of the young lady to whom the hand of his only son was pledged.

"The new rose sprang into amazing popularity and fame, like the young woman whose name it bore, and who herself was known far and wide, from New Orleans to White Sulphur, from Washington to Saratoga. Age and youth and fashion, wherever she had friends, took it up. Gentlemen wore it, a single bud, in their lapels. Ladies fastened it, a single blossom, in their hair. Poems in its honor appeared in the *Ladies' Annuals,* as well as in the columns of our local papers, *The Louisville Journal* and *The Daily Democrat.* One such poem bore the initials, G. D. P.; George D. Prentice, the great editor; another A. W.; Amelia Welby, the Kentucky poetess; a third, G. K.; Georgiana Keats, the young and beautiful daughter of George Keats, of our own local group, and the niece of John Keats, the supreme poet of beauty, I say it, of all time!"

"And then, Colonel Te?"

"Lucy Routt married, not the son of choleric Stephen Janvier, but John Wing. Married him offhand, overnight, you might say."

The Colonel straightened again, and again tweaked his nose. "It seems but yesterday, as I tell it. The Janvier interests and political sympathies were identi-

fied with *The Daily Democrat,* and they as well, were supposed to be the backers of this paper financially. The political fortunes of the Routts, the father and son both were in public life, were identified with *The Louisville Journal.* It was a day of politics, big issues were afoot, and feeling ran high.

"Every young man of standing whatever, belonged to the State militia. War was threatening, and these young men were drilling by day and by night. There is, or was, a term in military parlance, *'Get The Route,'* the equivalent of saying that one has received his marching orders. You of to-day, my dear, say r-o-u-t-e. Well, we didn't, we said *rout.*"

"Yes, Colonel Te?"

"Following the marriage of Lucy Routt with John Wing, there appeared in *The Journal,* what the friends of the Janviers, and *The Democrat,* called a scurrilous and offensive verse. Its lines suggesting that in keeping with the recent flouting of a young gentleman in local high life, the name of a certain rose of popularity, be changed from the L—R—, to the *'Get-The-Route.'*

"And these lines, my dear, were the start of exceeding feeling for time to come between the friends of the parties concerned; and were the occasion as well, of long-continued and acrimonious interchange between the two newspapers, editorially and through contributors."

"And after that, Colonel Te?"

"The Janviers, Lucy, are good losers; are first-class sporting stock. Here and there in the county to-day, in old farmhouse yards, and beside old doorsteps, you will come on a climbing yellow-rose that the farmer's

old mother, or grandmother, will tell you is the Get-The-Route. And such a rose, as you seem to be aware, slipped from time to time from older stock, still disports itself on the Janvier's porch railing."

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The guests of the evening all were gone, but Helen Janvier and Stephen. The son, having helped his mother into her wrap, a combination of transparent chiffon and fur edging that stood to the male mind for paradox, faced about, and made an announcement to the family group.

The group were in the hall, the senior host politely but visibly impatient at the hour. Anne was snuffing out candles in a wall bracket. Evelyn, having lighted a cigarette taken from a gold case, had thrown herself prone on a sofa, a piece of old mahogany that stood against the wall. Good-looking in a clear-eyed, fresh-skinned way, she was a Kentucky girl brought back by Charlie from the east a bit against her will, her parents having sought that larger field for social and financial glory. Charlie, black-haired and blue-eyed, good-natured and well-bred, the best type of the sporting, and at the same time astute young business man, sagged on the arm of the sofa beside her.

STEPHEN *(breaking in on this group with his news)*.—I'm going to marry Lucy Wing, or it's up with me. Don't everybody speak at once, please.

CHARLIE.—Well! *(his lips shaped themselves to a whistle that never came)*.

EVELYN *(turning her head on the stiff roll pillow of her sofa far enough to glance at Stephen)*.—This is so sudden, George, dear.

ANNE JANVIER *(leaving her candles, gathering up her scarf from a chair, and joining the group).*—Stevie does have a way of taking it out of us sober people, doesn't he?

MR. JANVIER *(with bland impersonality).*—A handsome girl. Didn't some one mention that Mrs. Wing called up the other day, announcing her return, and saying she'd like to send the girl over to-night? The Routts never were strong on looks; the grandmother, of course, was a Routt; but the Wings, men and women, from way back, have been good-lookers.

CHARLIE.—As well as high-steppers——

STEPHEN *(beaming on the group).*—I thought you'd feel it impossible to permit a lady with so much of charm, as well as background, to be lost to the family; ripping, isn't it?

HELEN *(having adjusted her wrap by now to her liking).*—If I thought you were being merely flippant, my son——

STEPHEN *(catching her hand and carrying it to his lips).*—Thanks for the doubt.

EVELYN.—S'long, Stevie; you'd better get on home. We want to talk you over after you've gone.

STEPHEN *(speaking musingly).*—Whatever has an air of sustained or thoughtful interchange is disturbing to Evelyn; continuity, in her opinion, is to be avoided, as savoring of recourse to the brain.

EVELYN *(retorting).*—It's not enough for woman to be beautiful, or even virtuous. According to our day we must please.

MR. JANVIER *(irrelevantly).*—There's a feeling of not unnatural self-consciousness on the part of a Janvier, even after all these years, at the thought of such a connection as you, Stevie, suggest.

STEPHEN.—Go on. There'll never be a better time to say it out.

ANNE.—I'd prefer you'd go home, and let us get to bed.

MR. JANVIER *(crossing the hall to a table, and laying the butt of his cigar on a tray).*—No one has a keener admiration for Mrs. Wing's amazing qualities than I have, my dear boy. If only dating this a dozen years back, when she in need of a gardener, took ours of thirty-odd years' service from us. Our firm, too, has had business with her in my time, and I personally can testify to her shrewdness in the conduct of her own interests. *(He paused here, as if gathering up his next statement with care.)* Mrs. Wing, in her way, is the keenest woman, young or old, I've ever known, if not the most scrupulous in gaining her ends. She always has been one for seeing, knowing, and doing. She loves a sense of her power. In her day she has meddled in a great many things, seemingly possessed with a genius for interference and action. She would have been a noted figure in some eighteenth century, petty sovereign's court politics.

EVELYN.—Stevie wouldn't go home when he could.

MR. JANVIER *(passing over the interruption).*—Mrs. Wing, young woman as she was at the time of her marriage, was a match for any member of the Wing family she went into. And God knows there was blood wild enough in that group. Few women can defy convention and society as she did in the years following her marriage, and also rule it. To disregard reputation is a tight-rope performance, but she managed it. We of my day grew up on the stories still current of her. What did she not do in

those earlier married years? What mad act then, or later, did her capricious will ever deny itself! All her life she has been violent in her stands. In the Civil War she was a Unionist; she had been raised a Whig; and she never lived with John Wing, her husband, one hour after he put on the Confederate gray. She was then near forty, and the mother of a grown son. After the war, her husband let her have what she wanted, which was the country place at Ashe, and he lived with his coterie of old servants in the town house. Mrs. Wing in her old age being as she is, shrewd, caustic, and more than cold and dry at bottom, I can't fancy that a young girl raised by her, will have retained many illusions.

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The two last guests finally were gone. Evelyn still prone on her back, her face to the ceiling, smoking her third cigarette, asked a question.

"Is Stephen ever in earnest? About anything?"

Her husband stooping and lightly kissing her ear, cross-fired.

"Are you?"

* * * * * *

At this same moment Stephen himself was answering this question. His roadster was speeding under his hand along the quarter of a mile that lay between the gate of the Janvier homestead and the modern house built on a corner of the original place, and belonging to his mother and himself.

The rough, good smell of the damp wayside weeds reached the two in the car. The moon was gone, and the stars overhead shone brightly.

"Warm enough, Mummy? It's chill."

"Quite warm."

"I mean what I said back yonder to the family. It's real, Mummy."

"Yes, my son."

* * * * * *

Fifteen minutes later, Helen, as she prepared for bed in her room of cheerful chintzes and modern furniture, heard her son as he moved about his bedroom across the hall, singing with softly modulated fervor.

He sang more happily than well, but under two varieties of stress when alone in his room, unfailingly sang. The one was when he was perturbed, the other when he was content. A person familiar with these two manifestations never confused them.

Helen, brushing her fair hair, smiled as these sounds of portent reached her. Born with the body and soul to be the mother of many, she in her silent way lavished her maternity upon this one. As she read him, alert, exercising inflexibly his heaven-bestowed privilege to be happy and to enjoy, quick in his instinct as to right and wrong, sweet-tempered and generous-hearted, the temperament of this son of hers was his best friend; he being the possessor of that blessing given to the few, joy of the spirit.

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As for this Stephen moving about his bedroom, this young man of fervor and directness, by whom the successive manifestations of life were welcomed with an ardor and an intoxication whereof colder temperaments are incapable, he was saying to himself, that much, *much* may happen in a moment of time. God said, Let there be light, and there was light. And again saying, It is not good for man to be alone, made He woman!

Recalling his exultant rush across the room to Lucy this evening, he swore he didn't know how he got to

her. Telling himself that a man when he feels the impact of the universe, or in other words goes forward to meet for the first time the woman he loves, is to be forgiven if he reels. Affirming that his soul had risen up, and as some rapt and flaming seraph voicing his sanctus, was chanting as he strode across the floor, "She or none, the wife at your hearthstone, and the mother of your children!"

We move on some defenses through patient sapping and gradual undermining, so he told himself; others we take by assault, accounting as an asset, the element of surprise; instinct making clear to him in the instant of seeing Lucy, which method he meant to pursue.

His arm placed about her to-night, nevertheless, upheld her with superlative nicety, guiding her with exquisite restraint. So fixed within his mind from the initial moment of beholding her, was the sanctity of this girl's person that, as he carried her swiftly and surely about the room, he was reiterating with rapture to himself, *"Lest my jewel I should tyne!"*

Moving from table to bureau, from bureau to wardrobe, getting out of his coat, taking off his collar, he was filled with an ineffable happiness. Life was sweet to him, was welcome; nature, and man's participation in nature, were good. His mind ran so far ahead of the moment that Lucy was his, and he was hers; a thing *de facto;* accomplished; and so far as he was party to it, fixed; as inevitable as that day shall follow night; as immutable and enduring as eternity is long.

He was an egoist, yes! Every Janvier was this. Creatures with such a passionate sense of being, they see all in life as from a center. And a thing once be-

come dear to such an one, in the same moment of this investiture, becomes with him set apart; separated even in the thought itself from the common secular usages; inviolate; and dedicated to homage and worship.

* * * * * *

Twelve miles across country, Lucy Wing stood in the center of her bedroom. It was an old-fashioned room, huge and square, with moldings, and doors set between half pilasters in white, square, wide-silled windows above white wainscoting, and mahogany furniture more ponderous than distinguished.

She had made no move toward undressing other than to let her white cloak slip from her bare shoulders onto a chair. The slightly severe modeling of her young features gave a look of gravity to her face at all times, this severity now being shot through with terror.

An excessive rectitude of mind characterized her. She never willingly dissembled. She saw that the world, which to her hitherto unawakened senses was a sexless Eden, to her was sexless no more.

She sank down in a piteous heap upon the floor with her face buried against the seat of a chair. Perhaps never before in her life had she occupied an attitude of abasement such as this. These tides, flowing and breaking in waves upon her, were like shame which scorches and blights.

Love comes differently to different people. To Stephen it was a happiness and a delight, an exaltation that uplifts and glorifies. To Lucy it was the inquisition and the rack; it was anguish and shrinking, and hideous dismay. That such a conflict could arise between a human creature's intentions, and nature's meanings, came upon her with a crushing, a down-piling force.

Most gladly would she have escaped. Warrington Adams had told her many things about Stephen Janvier. But he had not told her that she, hardly waiting for him to knock at the door of her heart, would find herself faint with conscious love for him.

CHAPTER V

THE country place of Mrs. Wing and her granddaughter was on the outskirts of Ashe, a township twelve miles across country from the homes of the two Janvier families.

This township was made up of half-a-dozen extensive old places, survivals these, kept up according to the circumstances of the present owners; twice as many modern homes; a school, two churches, a store, the post-office, and the railroad and the trolley stations.

The following afternoon Stephen Janvier slowed his car as he entered the sleepy village. The avenue into which he turned at the post-office corner was very peaceful. Black ash trees met overhead, the gravel sidewalks were worn and a bit weedy, shrubs and trees hung over the fence-lines and the hedges, and the air was sweet with the scents of grass newly cut, locust blooms, and honeysuckle.

At a gateway of double iron gates and worn brick posts, he stopped his car. Facing the gates across the road was the parsonage, the home of Dr. and Mrs. Harlan, and their son, Bennie, of the high legs; a dwelling in a yard well above the road, and reached by stone steps set in a bank overgrown with honeysuckle. Adjoining the dwelling was the church, the two alike mantled with Virginia creeper, the newly unfolded leaves tenderly and freshly green. Beech trees with their trunks hoary and gray, and their far-flung branches

level in their spread, gave a sense of forest stillness and aloofness to both church and dwelling.

Stephen opened the double gates. He remembered coming here when he was eleven years old, but never since. It was the year of the Cuban war and he, a lad, was with his father who held a first-lieutenant's commission in the State guard, and was to leave the next day to join his organization in Tampa, Florida.

As Stephen recalled it, his father was come to offer his services to the old, and the young, Mrs. Wing, the grandmother, and the wife, of Captain John Henry Wing, who already was in camp at Tampa; with the idea that the ladies might have commissions or messages, for their absent soldier.

Stephen would say this visit paid sixteen years ago took place earlier in the season; that it was no leafy June, as to-day. He remembered a magnolia tree to the side of a brick house, broad and low-browed, that announced Spring by its pink and white blossoms on branches black and leafless.

He got back into his car and followed the driveway, a ribbon of macadam road that, as it wound about the undulations of a rolling woodland, crossed a bridge above a fairly respectable stream, then made its way towards a line of osage hedge.

* * * * * *

The car came to a stop before the steps of the low-browed house of Stephen's recall, and he sprang out. Some pigeons that strutted the driveway, went up in the air, whirling and whirling as they ascended. The sweet wing whir-r-r as they circled, came back to him. He stood where he was, and gazed about him.

A lawn mower pushed by a Negro man came toward him, a blur of grass cuttings spinning in the air above

the machine. The man, who was elderly, was tall, with eagle features. He was in shirt sleeves and blue jeans pantaloons, and wore a broken straw hat. In Stephen's mind was a consciousness that he ought to know him.

A robin hopped on the lawn; two robins; three; sleek fellows, rotund and big-breasted, and undisturbed by guest, Negro man, or lawn mower. From the direction of some shrubberies, syringas and lilacs, with a foreground of peonies, came the bell-like note of a thrush on the stillness of the afternoon.

Stephen turned. To the right of the house was the magnolia, a tree with shining foliage, a branch crowding a corner of the porch. He went up the steps to the porch, which extended across the front of the house. A voice came through a screened window, a voice which if old, was decided.

"Is that Stephen Janvier? If it is, open the screen door, and find your way here to the sitting room. It's to the left of the hall. The servants, I haven't a doubt, are napping."

Stephen as he went in, was smiling. It pleased him mightily that Mrs. Wing, as he knew the speaker to be, should be thus in character.

The hall was broad and high, and divided the house from front to back. The door at the rear was stretched wide, and afforded a far view of country.

He was recalling certain things. Here on the wall was old John Henry Wing, the Indian fighter, an atrocious portrait in oils, painted probably long after the original was dead. On that former visit, Stephen, aged eleven, had stolen from the side of his father in the parlor, to return to the hall, and gaze with fascinated eyes on the villainously executed canvas.

The founder of the Wing family in Kentucky, lean

and grim-faced, and seated on a log which for its background had a stockade fence, was in gay-fringed hunting shirt, with shot-bags and powderhorn hanging from his belt, coarse woolen leggings and moccasins; armed with flint-lock, tomahawk, and—fie, fie, John Henry—scalping knife!

On the opposite wall hung another portrait. The subject of this canvas, portly and imposing, in a black gown with bands, Stephen took to be Robertson Wing, in his day the preëminent Presbyterian divine, by reason of his piety, notoriously the exception in the Wing family.

Stephen turned to the door on the left, entered and found himself in a pleasantly shabby room, big and square, and set about with big and square mahogany furniture, and in the presence of that lively and contumacious octogenarian, Mrs. Lucy Wing, née Routt.

She was by a window that commanded a view of the porch, installed in a chair with arms, with a footstool beneath her feet.

An amazing wee creature she, in her rusty black, with a cap of net and ribbons slipped rakishly to one side of her head. It is a question if she weighed eighty pounds, yet the spirit which dwelt in this withered body, and that looked from the quick-darting eyes, was indomitable and enduring.

"It's you, is it, Stephen Janvier?"

"Stephen it is, Mrs. Wing, and happy that you've not forgotten him."

He laughed beneath her scrutiny, then took the hand that she, following her survey of him, person and features, extended. He was eminently at his ease, and tremendously delighted with her.

Mrs. Wing laughed here herself. Hers was a wicked mirth. Her nose came down like the letter V upon her pursed lips, worldly lips, and sardonic, if expression tells anything. Her eyes, far-set in their sunken sockets beneath straggling eyebrows, were beady-bright for all of this, and full of malice. A cane of highly polished wood with a gold knob for its head, rested against the arm of her chair. Every now and again, as Stephen was to find, she tapped on the floor with this cane for emphasis.

Many things were known to Stephen about this old woman. Her father was the American minister to two European courts in turn. Her brother was the attorney-general in two cabinets. She in her eighty-eight years had known many people of many lands; ambassadors, statesmen and diplomats, presidents and princes, beribboned and bemedaled men of rank in armies and navies. It was pointed out by those who did not love Mrs. Wing, that among her far-flung friendships, she numbered few ecclesiastics, few if any savants, and no nonentities. As Stephen had heard said of her, hers was a penchant for the tangible energies and actions.

Bringing her malicious laugh to a stop, she completed it with an ejaculation.

"'Umph!"

There was bite in the syllable as uttered, but no enlightenment.

A footfall sounded behind Stephen, and Mrs. Wing flung a remark over his intervening head.

"Don't go, Kitty, *don't go,* I say. Here's a visitor you'll be glad to see, if no one else is."

Stephen had wheeled.

"You know Miss Kitty McKane, Stephen? She made your pantie-waists-and-petticoats before you were out of dresses."

Stephen knew Miss Kitty. Who in the community did not, either city or its environs? A seamstress first, then, the forewoman at the dressmaking establishment of Madame Leroy, and later herself the proprietor of the establishment, the friends and patrons of Miss McKane in her successive upward steps included the Janvier families. She and Stephen shook hands warmly.

Miss McKane, no longer young, was large but excellently well-corseted. Her face was belaid with pink powder, and chalky with white, her eyebrows were the result of a pencil well-applied, and her hair was faded to that indefinite color peculiar to the aging blonde who for overlong against the inroads of time, has used sage tea; or is it henna? She wore about her throat a string of good Parisian pearls, and an exceedingly well-chosen chain dangled against her chiffon blouse, and carried a *lorgnon.*

But not henna, nor any overlay upon her cheek bones of the bloom of youth, could rob Miss Kitty McKane of her eminently satisfactory personality. As capable as dependable, with a judgment shrewdly aware of human foibles, and also of the redeeming good along with the bad, she was retired on her earnings now. Long since an annual visitor to Paris, with a ten days' stay in London, or upon the Riviera, she was a landed proprietor with a home of her own facing the park. At the theater on the first night of every play, her name as a donor on every charity list, making no claims, assuming nothing, demanding nothing, yet in the regard

of every one who knew her holding her own, she was a welcome friend in more than one household where, as a girl, she came twice a year as a seamstress.

MRS. WING.—Kitty as a beneficent act, came out here several days before I got home, routed the servants out of their hibernating, and got the odor of moth balls out of the rugs and the curtains. She does such things for me because of everybody on this earth, I am come to depend on her.

MISS KITTY *(smiling)*.—Needs must.

STEPHEN *(coming back at Miss McKane)*.—My mother when she hears this, will feel she has a grievance. You wouldn't come to her last autumn, when she was alone, and asked you.

MRS. WING *(tartly)*.—Don't tell her then. This household has a claim on Kitty, prior to any you Janviers possibly can put forward. Place a chair for Kitty, Stephen, and bring your own nearer. And now sit down, you're so big you darken the room. I hate to raise my voice, and I've a few things planned to say that are good for you to hear. You're not to go, Kitty. I sent for you, when I saw Stephen arriving, because I wanted you here.

MISS KITTY.—And if I'd rather go?

MRS. WING *(ignoring this)*.—If I die one of these days at hand, and at my age who can say I may not, Kitty's given me her word, she'll close or rent her house in town, and come and stay with Lucy. Kitty McKane, if you do not know it, young man, is an amazing person. I'd trust Lucy to her sooner by far than to most. She's familiar with my affairs and with my ideas concerning these, and is set down in my will

as joint executor with two others, men of affairs these are, and with them joint guardian and adviser of my granddaughter.

[*She settled in her chair, her eyes surveying the one of them, and the other.*]

MRS. WING.—Lucy's not here. I sent her across fields to a neighboring farm, fundamentally to take the dogs who needed a walk, and incidentally to inquire about some ewes that my man Jerry wants me to buy. You passed Jerry, my factotum as well as gardener, as you came in, Stephen. An old-timer he is, trained on your grandfather Janvier's place; an invaluable person, I couldn't do without him.

[*She cackled maliciously, fully aware evidently, that the loss of Jerry to the Janvier family never had been forgiven.*]

MRS. WING.—Lucy is no mean countrywoman herself. She and Jerry are great planners. I got rid of her this afternoon on the assumption that you meant what you said in your message to me of last night, and would be here. *Sit down,* I say, Kitty, *sit down!* Don't keep standing there with your hand on the back of your chair! You mean to go; and I tell you I won't have it!

[*Her eyes came back to Stephen.*]

MRS. WING.—Well? Why did you send me that rose last night? I prefer not to believe it was for impertinence. And what brings you here this afternoon? I've lived in this house all your life, and you've never showed your adult face here before.

STEPHEN *(who has been gazing at Miss Kitty, gathering up, endeavoring to recall and rehearse certain facts in his mind, back of a consciousness that Mrs.*

Wing, by general verdict, was irrevocably Miss Kitty's debtor. If Mrs. Wing thought by her question to disconcert him she was mistaken in her person).—I came to call on you, and to see Lucy. And incidentally to tell you, so far as the intention can determine it, that I mean to marry her if she'll have me.

MRS. WING *(after a second of silence, during which the cane propped against her chair, slipped crashing to the floor, Stephen picking it up and replacing it. She snapped her rejoinder, the words ejaculated fiercely).*—Like a Janvier; ever a cocksure, a confident lot; or like the one I knew best.

[*She shifted in her chair.*]

MRS. WING.—Kitty McKane, you made his pantie-waists-and-petticoats, as I reminded him, and later his blouses and monstrous collars when he was a Fauntleroy, and wore curls. I recall him thus, an angel child, following his mother into the family pew. You brought his smart sayings with you here, to babble about to me. You were a fool about him, and never got over the weakness. You marked a set of scandalous expensive handkerchiefs for him when he went off to college. Oh, I haven't let on all I know. And you coaxed his pajamas at that same time from his mother, and yourself put his monogram on them. You hear this paragon of your so-long worshiping say that he's going to marry our Lucy?

MRS. WING *(she turned again, bringing her gaze back to Stephen, who returned it).*—'Umph! My theory always has been that nothing can be done unless it's undertaken. Since you're honest with me, I'll be frank with you. It was with such an end in view,

a possibility long cherished, that I sent Lucy over last night to your uncle's house.

MISS MCKANE *(her hold on the chair back relaxing suddenly, and the chair scraping harshly and abruptly on the floor).*—I'll go back to what I was busy with upstairs.

MRS. WING.—It's news to Kitty, and she's furious. She wants to tell me, and is afraid, that I've played with destinies before. She wants to remind me that Lucy is the apple of her eye, as of mine; wants to say that she's brought her across to me in Europe more than once during the summers, to and from school, and kept her with her in Paris until I arrived there. That she's mothered her since she was a baby, and won't have this juggling and interfering with what after all is the girl's own affair. Kitty wants to say all this to me, but *(triumphantly) she doesn't dare!*

MISS KITTY.—Perhaps I do dare.

MRS. WING *(her voice as suddenly become conciliatory).*—We exonerate you, Kitty, from all complicity, Stephen and I. Sit down, I say, *sit down;* you know the worst. As for you, Stephen, I'm nearing ninety, if you don't know it. I was seventy-two when this great-grandchild was left in my care. I'm tired. I settled on you to give her to, six years ago. I long had thought about it for reasons of my own; keeping a watch on you, the boy, the youth, and the young man; encouraging confidences from Kitty here as far back as her days as seamstress in your mother's house; and she to this moment not suspecting it. Myself who never call on any creature, have maintained such a relation with your mother,

alone of the Janvier connection. I reached my final decision on that occasion when you, with your mother, called on me.

STEPHEN.—Thank you.

MRS. WING.—Lucy was fourteen then; a coltish creature; marvelously lovely in a high-legged, awkward way with that. I had kept her closely out here at Ashe, where she tore about the country the seasons through, a young Amazon on her pony. Familiarity seemed to me a factor against, rather than for my plans. Believe me, I can be patient and cunning, if I find the end seems worth while. The year she was fourteen, I put her away at school, and kept her away.

[*She paused, righted her cap with a jerk, then hit the floor with her cane.*]

MRS. WING *(to Stephen)*.—Don't sit there staring like a reflective-eyed bovine! For God's sake don't tell me I'm mistaken after all, and have picked on a dummy! Warrington Adams is your intimate; this fact went far to sustain me in my own judgments. I've thrown Lucy a great deal with Warrington these last few years. He's mentioned her to you?

STEPHEN *(he has been regarding her fixedly, a thousand forgotten things newly grasped in their present significance, filtering through his brain)*.—And if I decline to give away Warrington's confidences? *(But he was smiling as he said this.)*

MRS. WING *(she looked at him, speaking a little piteously now)*.—She *is* a lovely creature? I'm right about this, am I not?

STEPHEN *(rising, taking a step, and lifting the old hand, whose fingers were tapping the arm of the*

chair, and carrying it to his lips).—Very; so very, very right.

MRS. WING *(her spirits returned at this, and speaking even gayly and briskly).*—I brought my child up, Stephen, to the best of my ability. I put her to school to pick up the requisites only. I took her out of her classes whenever I desired. She went about with me at these times to learn the more important matters; something of men and women and things; and how to carry herself. Said I to myself, "No elaboration of overschooling for her; no overemphasized attainments as shall make her opinionated, or yet self-conscious."

MRS. WING *(she was leaning forward now towards Stephen).*—Rather was it my plan to let her find out early what the world is; to have her grasp the workings, good and bad, in human nature; to see that she learned to face life with comprehension, and unflinchingly. To accustom her to go about for herself, with the idea that a woman, young or old, intent on her own affairs, is safe under all but extraordinary and abnormal conditions. There's nothing like common sense when in the case of a woman, grace accompanies this to soften it. My granddaughter has a sound instinct for people and things decent, but, thank God, she's no *prude.*

MRS. WING *(leaning back, and smiling delightedly).*—Kitty McKane, that I wouldn't let go, is so outraged by now that her indignation is beautiful to behold! Kitty is a romantic. It's the Achilles heel in a character otherwise remarkably sound. She's read every popular love story that's appeared in forty years, and goes to every movie film that has love for its theme. She prefers to have you believe that Lucy's

some milk-and-water *jeune fille.* Kitty suffers from that confusion in the mind peculiar to all sentimentalists, of confounding ignorance with goodness!

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The door swung farther open, and a Negro man-servant wearing a white jacket came in with a tray bearing a pitcher and glasses. He was elderly and spare, with white mutton-chop whiskers on an austerely set brown face. The very noiselessness of his entrance, together with the silent placing of the tray upon a table, drew the eye to him, and kept him the center of the attention.

Mrs. Wing, fidgeting mightily, watched his movements; he with a pertinacious ignoring of first her, and then Miss Kitty, pouring and serving his claret lemonade according to his own, and not their, ideas. His withdrawal, in its turn, was a function.

MRS. WING *(bursting forth fiercely).*—Thomas Harris has kept me aware of my inferiority for fifty-one years, which is the exact period of time that he's triumphed over me. He rules me, and humbles me, and knows it. For fifty-one years I've wanted to tell him to go, and aware that he'd look on it as an admission of my discomfiture, I've refused to be goaded by him to it! *(She out-flung a hand.)* There goes Kitty following him. If I've lost her through what she's heard, and she goes back to town, with the servants out of hand, and not a curtain hung, I'll set her loss down to you, young man! Put your glass down if it's in your way, you don't have to drink the mildly tinctured stuff, if you don't want to.

STEPHEN.—You're not going to let me finish it? I'm not to have another glass?

MRS. WING.—Finish it and get through. I'm doing without my afternoon nap on your account.

STEPHEN.—Yes, ma'am. *(He said it meekly.)*

MRS. WING.—You're not so docile as you appear, young man. I clashed with your blood sixty-odd years ago. Like as not I'll never talk to you again in just this fashion. I make no apology. It's the last wish of an embittered old heart to see you married to my Lucy.

[*She settled back in the chair, her cap again fallen over one ear.*]

MRS. WING.—They'll tell you hard things about me. Kitty will tell you these. And so will Philippa Janvier, your great-aunt, Mother Mary Gertrude, as she calls herself. When I could get down to Philippa in her convent school without too great fatigue, I went to see her. It's too much of an undertaking for me now and we never meet. Philippa is that always arresting curiosity, a reversion to the faith of her forefathers. She wanted a vocation. There were few open to gentlewomen in those days.

STEPHEN.—My aunt often has spoken to me of you.

MRS. WING.—She and Kitty, and others less tolerant of me, will tell you how I treated my daughter-in-law. *I'll* tell you that she was a clinging, weeping, weak-headed fool; this wife of my only son, who was killed at twenty-two on the field at Chickamauga, wearing the Confederate gray, like his father. And they'll tell you how I treated the wife of my dead son's only son, in her day; my grandson; a captain of volunteers in the Spanish war; fed on rotten food, rotted with fever in a filthy camp at Tampa, killed by his government. But I needn't dwell on this with

you, who lost your father at the same time, and through the same scandalous betrayal.

MRS. WING *(sitting up fiercely)*.—I was talking about my two daughters-in-law, hateful relation; but we won't say anything more about the dead. Maybe they've picked up more spirit beyond. I trust so. I abominate the overly good, which is to say, the spineless woman, and so, I predict, do the angels. Here's my point. The last thing of my own allowed me by life for cherishing, is this great-granddaughter, Lucy. She's used to love, and to fair treatment. She's fair-minded herself, and affectionate to those few to whom her heart is given. The older generation hereabouts, your Uncle Stephen among these, must allow that old Lucy Wing, sharp-eyed macaw—how they love me—has scored to the end in this great-grandchild she's raised; the crowning paradox to her worldly cynical life.

MRS. WING *(after sinking back in her chair, to bring herself as quickly up again)*.—Not that Lucy is what Kitty McKane would have you believe, one of your innocents, your blood-sucking, none-the-less deadly, because flaccid, incapables. I've lived with two such, the wife of my son, and the wife of my grandson, that I spoke of. What were both these women, offered by their Victorian day, as helpmates to these two men? They were negatives, sentimentalists, parasites. I've made of my Lucy a real woman, one who when her time comes, shall not be afraid to be herself; and if such be her destiny, will not be afraid to love and to yearn. It's only fair I tell you these things.

STEPHEN *(rising; for some few moments his gaze has been fixed, held by something beyond the window; he is smiling).*—I see Lucy and the dogs that you spoke of coming across the grass. May I go and meet her?

MRS. WING.—Whose child is she, pray? I don't plan the future of a great-granddaughter every day. *(But she, too, is smiling.)* Lucy is a Wing, and through her mother she is a Rand, and through me, a Routt. Mettlesome bloods these all are in the past story of Kentucky. I never decry the power of the past in any of us. Awaken the woman in my child, and you call to life a creature who will hold you to account. And now I'm worn out. I'm an old woman, feeble, and overdue to be gone. Go meet Lucy, and, if it's really your desire, find out if she wants you.

The gaze of these two meeting, out of the encounter there appeared to come on each, a sudden panic. The young man stooping, touched her hand, a quick hand-clasp, abruptly through with. His breath came in little gasps. As for Mrs. Wing, wee old creature, she was crying weakly.

A moment later, and Stephen's voice calling, came in from the porch to Mrs. Wing in her chair.

"Cheero, Lucy, I'm as good as my threat; I'm here, you see."

CHAPTER VI

LUCY coming with trailing feet and leaden slowness across the grass towards the house, paused at this call from the porch, and looked up. So did the escort at her heels, a venerable collie, a limping and ancient Irish terrier, and a fat spaniel.

It is given to some human creatures to hold the delighted eye, and to satisfy the senses. Beneath her English garden hat, her face glowed with an English brilliance, its crimson vivid as a flower. Her sage-green smock was English, too, and struck Kentucky eyes as exotic. The lawn of clipped turf was behind her, with here and there a great still tree, and she made a picture that spoke of youth and love, as directly as any Romney portrait of Lady Hamilton whom she resembled, though here was a different enough nature.

All day she had recalled Stephen's intention to be here this afternoon, and beyond any control on her part had rejoiced. And all day she prayed that something would prevent his coming.

She dared not trust herself, dared not risk herself with him. She was terrified at the direction of her impulse; at this crowding and resistless trend of her mind that was carrying her protesting to her fate.

As she returned home from her errand, coming by a footpath that crossed the woodland and brought her to the grounds about the house, she saw the road-

ster. Divining it was Stephen's car, her feet dragged, and her progress was leaden.

At the sight now of the figure in white flannels on the porch-step, her heart beat violently, and she feared she could not breathe. The presence in her consciousness of this young man was not a new thing. He had occupied a definite place in her thoughts. One and another thing had awakened this interest; remarks from Warrington Adams; words from Miss Kitty McKane; references by her grandmother. Yes, she saw this now.

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Stephen on his part as he stood there for the moment on the steps was beaming. Lucy seen thus by day ravished the heart of him. A gust of summer breeze caught her white skirt, whipping this about her, and fluttered her hat brim.

Taking the steps at a leap, and the stretch of lawn at a sprint, he brought up before her and the dogs. His eyes swept her. How thrilling was her face! Her fine brows; her thin nose; her young lips that were at once so confident, and so imperious!

"Lucy?"

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Now what can be done with a man such as this? In any other it would be insufferable. He baffled the girl. In sheer vigor alone, he made every creature else she could recall seem pale beside him. Beneath his sweeping gaze, she felt the color surging and deepening in her face. She hated him for this. Here was an abounding personality, clearly aware of itself, and prepared to use its endowments as such, to the utmost! She had a feeling of fighting for her life!

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He addressed himself at this, to the green and golden

afternoon about him, grass, trees, flowers; or possibly it was to the errant wind that he spoke.

"Her matter-of-factness dampens me; her indifference intimidates me. I and hope have traveled together so far in our thoughts since we said good-by at the door of her car last night, we were prepared for something kinder."

He stooped, his fingers seeking and playing with the ears and the long head of the old collie. Then he straightened and regarded her.

"Lucy, I've confessed the enormity of my aspirings to your grandmother. If I'm not altogether absolved, at least I'm allowed to come and find you!"

He bent again to pat the collie's head, and again stood erect.

"You're thinking that I'm—shall I call it—*nervy?* And if this be the word, I am. So I am, Lucy. I'm taking long chances."

* * * * * *

He pleased her better with this, and then, too, her heart was beating with less violence. Granting that he was tempestuous, there was a matter-of-factness with his vigor. He was a person, she began to grasp, in whose hands one could feel secure. And he had humor, this with its wholesomeness, a grace as saving as salt that savors.

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The while he was talking. "If you're implying that I'm to dissemble, you must teach me, Lucy. For me, I haven't the foggiest idea!"

His eyes had found and were holding hers. Perturbedly he was shaking his head. "You considerably upset me when you imply that this bluntness of mine is wrong! Finding myself where I am to-day is amaz-

ing enough! Let me tell you this! And if you're going to take away from me all my *bearings*——

"Lucy," he spoke, oh, softly, softly; "it's all of life to me, this thing come to me. I know this for a fact. Come, go along with me! Get the habit!"

She pressed by him. Stephen turning, watched her go, a light within his deep-seated and smiling eyes. Diana of the severe beauty, and the inflexible carriage, virgin enemy to the approach of man! Her would-be hounds as they moved off with her, doing their venerable best to leap about her as she went; across the gravel of the driveway, about a purple beech that flanked the house, and so on around the side of the dwelling.

To Lucy as she went, there was no likening of herself with Diana, protectress of the sex! Her hand sought her racing heart, and two crystal tears which threatened her cheeks that so rarely thus were visited, were drops not alone of helplessness, but of terror.

* * * * * *

Stephen became aware of Mrs. Wing on the porch leaning on her cane, and cackling wickedly. He went toward her.

He explained. "A sort of solemn joy overcame me, and when I came to, I found I'd let her go."

Mrs. Wing nodded. "She won't be back, for I've no intention of sending for her, and suggesting she do so. The mischief whatever it be, is of your making. I'm tired. I'm going in to continue my nap, and you may as well back your car off the edge of my drive where I see you managed to leave it, and go home."

* * * * * *

As Stephen reached his car, the Negro man, Jerry, came toward him. Stephen wondered that he had

failed to place him. At one period of his life, when he was a little fellow, he knew him well. In color café-au-lait, Jerry with his eagle eye surmounting a curved, beak nose, proved to have the voice, light-timbred, thin, and deprecating, of a child.

"I'm wonderin' if you'll carry a message to Miss Helen, yo' maw, Mr. Stephen? She sent a inquiry to me las' night by my sister's boy, Julius Buck."

"Glad to, Jerry. How do you expect your friends to know you, when you don't come forward and speak? Left us that long time ago to come to Mrs. Wing, did you? Hey, you old deserter?"

The wit of Jerry was slow. He took Stephen's sally, pondered it, then broke unexpectedly into chuckles. His body shook.

"Ol' Miss sent me to yo' grandpa, when I went. She sent fo' me to come back after he died, en I come."

"So we found out. What's your message to my mother? You and she have kept up your old-time friendliness then?"

Jerry's face with its melancholy cast of features, showed pleasure. His teeth which were long and narrow, gleamed between his thin lips.

"I wuz with yo' grandpa when yo' maw come there a bride. She knowed a heap about outdoors, en growin'-things, ez yo' grandpa en me foun' out. She wuz whut yo' call a nachel-bawn bloom-coaxer."

"She's keen to this day about her flowers, Jerry."

"So I know. She en me hev kep' right erlong, when the chance come, aswappin' whut we know. She spoke to Julius las' night over to yo' uncle's. She wants to know whut I call them red lily whut I sent her a settin' of las' fall."

"And what do you call them?"

Jerry rubbed his jaw with a horny palm. "I called thet lily 'To-Morrow,' 'cause to-morrow never comes. Ol' Miss bought them bulb f'om one of them books, same ez she's al'ays buyin' some'n she don't know nothin' atall about. I put 'em in the groun', en I waited. Waited two year fo' ary bloom to show."

"Yet you left *us* when *she* wanted you?"

Again Jerry's hand sought his jaw and rubbed it slowly. His perturbation was evident. "Ol' Miss sure did hev a high regard fo' yo' grandpa's jedgments. Seem-like thet's why she wuz boun' to hev me after he died. We've writ his name all over this place since I come back; writ it in the crops, en in the stock, en the breedin'; writ it in the flowers, en the young trees, en all the new plantin'."

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Five minutes later Stephen's roadster was eating up the distance between Ashe and the country house belonging to his mother and himself.

* * * * * *

Half an hour later he came through a bit of private woods that lay between his own and his uncle's house, following the footpath that traversed it. As he came out into his uncle's grounds, the lawn and the trees glowed in the last level lights of evening. A long ray from the sun, itself a dazzling orb at this moment descending, struck slanting across the buff façade of the wide house.

It was a one-storied dwelling above a high basement. Steps led to the porch, and there was a railed belvedere upon the roof.

Built in a day when home-burned brick was more enduring than perfect in its fashioning, the house at the start was plastered and tinted, and so had con-

tinued. It stood in the center of the lawn on a terrace cut by old stone steps and a flagging. In the lean years that followed the Civil War, the place through necessity was rented; and had a purchaser offered, must have been sold.

Above the roof and the belvedere as Stephen drew near, bull bats were darting in long erratic sweeps and dives. From the woodland left behind, birdcalls followed him. Anne, in a muslin dress, was on the porch and alone, which could not better have pleased him. He went up the steps.

"How are you, nice lady? Greetings!"

He found a chair for himself, placing it beside the long one on which she lounged.

She let her newspaper slip at this from her hand, and her face with its unmatched eyebrows, fine and dark, regarded him quizzically. She was a person, this aunt of his, devoutly to be desired as with, rather than against, one.

"Auntie, when you plan to be, you're a first-rate-woman-with-a-serpent's-tongue."

"Really, now?"

"I won't enumerate instances in the past of your witticisms directed at what you were pleased to call my affairs of the heart. Please don't do it now, that's all. I'm liable to turn nasty."

"Straight tip, Stevie?"

"Honest-to-goodness."

"I'll be good."

He stretched out a hand, and took hers. "It's such a wonderful, and a dumbfounding thing that's happened to me, auntie."

Her eyes, looking ahead of her, widened slightly, and then narrowed.

"So each of us think in our time," she said it dryly. "See that you remember this by and by, about the time you develop weight, along with a penchant for big business." She withdrew her hand.

Stephen looked at her. He thought of his uncle, and his too great complacency, the price paid by him for success. Was the effulgence that once was, gone for her? The grace for her of a day that is dead, no longer to be recalled?

Turning here in her chair and regarding Stephen, she took a brisker tone.

"What do you know of Lucy Wing?"

"You've seen her; dark-haired like yourself, and Miss Capulet, and W. Shakespeare's dark lady of the sonnets. Eh, what?"

"What else is she?"

"Whatcher mean?"

"Nothing belligerent, you don't have to fight. Have I ever told you of Mrs. Wing, on the day when we women in Kentucky cast our first vote? Restricted as we are to a voice in the school elections only. Well, I'll tell you now."

She sat up.

"Mrs. Wing, who was eighty-five that spring, went by in her car for Miss Ellen Twitchell, also living at Ashe, ninety-two years old, and as you may or may not remember, the daughter of a long dead bishop of the state. The two, in Mrs. Wing's car, proceeded to the butcher shop of Alonzo Simpson where the polls were held, alighted, and arm-in-arm went in, and cast their maiden votes."

Anne smiled at this picture of her recalling. "For Mrs. Wing, it was the triumphant close to two campaigns of long duration. Bishop Twitchell in his day

held violently with St. Paul that woman is the weaker vessel, and notoriously browbeat the women of his household, a wife and three daughters, and those of his flock, into submission. But not Mrs. Lucy Routt Wing, who after one especially violent altercation between him and herself, departed his fold, and became a Presbyterian. For forty-odd years since, so she tells it, she's worked toward two ends: one to obtain suffrage for women in Kentucky, and the other to see that the daughter of her ancient enemy exercised the privilege of the ballot when it arrived."

Mrs. Janvier's eyes dwelt on the young man astride the chair beside her. The affection conveyed in the gaze was unmistakable.

"When I came to Kentucky thirty years ago, Stevie, the husband of Mrs. Wing was pointed out to me. A dashing Confederate cavalryman in his day, the friend of Morgan and Duke, and fellow adventurer, he was as much a local asset as she. I often saw him on the street, and always the same. A dapper, elegant, young-old man, attired like a beau, invariably swinging a slender cane, and so one felt, the quintessence of refinement. A person, I was told, with an even fanatic devotion to the canons of good taste, politely romantic, formal, a bit the *précieuse,* and always the gentleman."

Her gaze continued on Stephen. "He was a dashing figure when Lucy Routt married him, a bit the blade, known as well in New Orleans and St. Louis, as in Louisville, and of his world and hers, eminently the catch and the beau. They lived apart from the day that he, in the face of her infuriated opposal, entered the Confederate army. One fancies him in the succeeding long years that followed the Civil War, a lonely and desperately hurt creature, sensitive of aspect

as he was, and living as he did alone with his servants in the Wing house in town—a house standing in a huge yard in the heart of town."

Anne leaned toward Stephen. "Understand me, dear boy; I'm dwelling on these things, why? Because I'm wondering what a personality such as Mrs. Wing has made of the granddaughter."

"Sweet lady, don't be tedious. Give me your hand again, I'm monstrous fond of you. Look across the grass to the slope of the woods. See the last light gleaming through its every little glade and opening? I hope I'm asked to stay for dinner, since that's what I'm here for? Mummy had a hurry call for dinner and bridge impromptu, an invitation omitting me."

"Stevie?"

He turned to regard her.

She spoke briskly. "There's a lovely simplicity about Helen, your mother, as you've discovered for yourself, which makes for peaceful living for those about her. She accepts without dissent or discussion, the ultimatums of others. She asks me to go with her in her car over to Ashe to-morrow, to call on Mrs. Wing and Lucy."

Anne leaned and made a pass at her newspaper, which Stephen recovered and handed to her.

"I told her that the visit to include me must be in the forenoon, as I'm due in the city at two o'clock at the women's headquarters for a conference about this primary registration. I'll take the trolley in from Ashe."

She paused, and resumed. "Because I'm as fatuously foolish about her self-willed son as ever Helen herself, oh, I'm positive I am, I'll tell you of other plans."

She looked at him. "Your Lucy has agreed to assist me at the polls the day after to-morrow, from 6 A. M. to noon; at which hour other women will relieve us. It's absolutely necessary for us women to get the vote out and registered; and we've apportioned the city among the women interested. It's considerably a feather in the cap of my lately achieved public reputation to have with me the granddaughter of the newly returned, great suffragist, Mrs. Wing. I'm sending in two servants to open enough of the town house for Lucy and me to sleep there to-morrow night. This is easier than to get in from here by six o'clock. Shall I say that you'll come by in your car during the afternoon, and bring Lucy in? For me to get her to town seems the least I can do."

She dropped back in her chair, and laughed. "That's all. Except this, in respect of Mrs. Wing. I concede you that in this flux and flow of life as the less courageous of us know it, it's something after all to have opinions and convictions strong as hers."

"Auntie," softly and rapturously, "you're a top-notcher. I've always rated you such, and I'm right. Thank you for the thought and the—coöperation!"

CHAPTER VII

STEPHEN appeared at Ashe the next afternoon, rounding up on the gravel before the house, again in a whir of startled and indignantly ascending pigeons. A suppliant arriving at the court of Venus—so the lively fancy of this exuberant young man—and disturbing her doves.

Mrs. Wing was on the porch in a chair with her foot-stool and her cane. Lucy's escort of yesterday, the three dogs, shared the steps.

The collie arose from his place, descended to the gravel, and came forward to meet the guest, concealing his rheumatic twinges beneath the courtliness and the gravity of his welcome. The Irish terrier, never troubling to move from his position of survey on the step, wrinkled a black lip upward from a well-nigh toothless and mottled gum, and rolled a gleaming, small eye inquiringly within its curtain of wiry hair. The spaniel, her long ears all but touching the step as she rose, wagged a nubbin of a tail, and barked shrilly.

Stephen distributing pats as he came, went up to Mrs. Wing. She gave him her hand.

"Well?"

"There's not a creature to compare with her, Mrs. Wing!" He made the statement ecstatically.

"Perhaps not," the rejoinder came dryly. "She'll be down. She's ready."

"You grant me my own way? I may make my try for her in my own fashion? You trust me?"

"I shan't interfere so long as I'm satisfied. I dare assume for myself the nature of lover you'll be."

"And how do you assume this, please?"

"Sit down while you wait. Sit here. I dare think I know this because your grandfather, of whom you are the replica and have been all your life, made love to me. Now do you begin to understand?"

Her eyes which had wandered, came back with a sudden fierceness. "I'm eighty-eight years old. The fires of life die hard. Remember that they do, young man. The soul in this old body still can grow faint, and this old frame trembles yet, at recall of that love-making."

The collie had come up the steps to the porch, as in answer to the stress and feeling in the old voice, and now stood, troubled and indeterminate, looking at Mrs. Wing.

"Come to me, my old friend," she said.

The dog walked to her, noble-headed old creature, raising his glance as he reached her, and regarding her from wistful and questioning eyes. "You want me, my human friend? You have need of me? I then am here." So the eyes, the lifted head, the slowly moving tail, all said.

Her fingers smoothed the dog's long head. "He is fifteen years old. I've an idea that he and I both will be going beyond before overlong, and I, who am dependent on good company, could wish it might be together."

"If my grandfather was the lover that you say, why did he fail?"

"Here is why." The reply came like the snap of a

whip, sharp, sudden. Mrs. Wing up-drew herself in her chair. "It's as well you know why."

She seemed to choose her words. "I was not easy to win, do not think it. No truly proud spirit surrenders with tranquillity. Your grandfather having won me, supposed he could put a ring upon my finger, and then march away with Zachary Taylor to Buena Vista, and the rest of it in Mexico. I was not *first* with him, you see."

She tapped with her cane upon the floor. "It's not for naught that women through instinct hate war. You probably have been reared to reverence the sword he brought back from that campaign, and which, so I'm told, hangs beneath his portrait in your uncle's dining room. Your grandfather *went* to Mexico, but he lost *me*. There are two factions in civilization, and I am of the nonmilitant faction. I never forgave him."

Lucy came out the door, followed by a colored woman who carried a bag; an elderly woman of upright carriage, with an impassive brown face that in its features and cast was a bit Coptic. Lucy gave Stephen her hand.

She wore a skirt and blouse, and a jacket loosely belted. A small hat enfolded her head as its wings a bird. This according to Stephen. She had the build and the pliant carriage of the outdoor creature. Her hands were tanned, and the triangle at the base of her throat framed by the V of her blouse, was burned rosy.

Mrs. Wing did not conceal her satisfaction in the girl's trim appearance; nor seek to hide her gratification in matters generally. It was evident that Lucy lent to this old age dwelling beside her more than a ray of youth's brightness.

"Go, the two of you, and seek happiness. I say so."

She sighed. "Would it were I. *Si jeunesse savait, si vieillesse pouvait.* Fifty years from now you'll better appreciate, both of you, what this means."

The colored woman had carried the bag to the car, where she stood with it, waiting. As Stephen and Lucy joined her, Jerry appeared around a clump of shrubbery, shoving his pruning shears into the pocket of his overalls as he came. Approaching, he stood beside the woman, chuckling mildly, and full of the interest of seeing the two off.

One saw from the likeness between Jerry and the woman, that they were kin, as in fact they were, brother and sister. Where the face of Jerry in repose was frankly melancholy, that of Ellen was impassive.

The next moment as beneath Stephen's hand the car started, the pigeons arose, whirring and circling.

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The roadster rushed along the stretch of pike. Open country was on each side. The corn, newly sprouted, was green in the furrows, the wheat amber-golden in the fields. The pastures were dotted here with herds grazing, there with ewes and their lambs. Locust trees along the fence lines, were weighted with blossoms that filled the afternoon with honeyed sweetness. A cardinal cut the air in front of the car, a streak of scarlet from a cedar on the one hand, to a hackberry on the other, a sky-blue jay in chattering pursuit. An oriole, orange and black, rushed from a thicket of sassafras in the wake of his fleeing mate, calling as he went, "Caleb Wheeler, Caleb Wheeler!"

Stephen, guiding the car, swept the girl beside him with a glance. Her eyes looked ahead, and her straight brows were knitted. He read her to be passionately of a mind, be this mind whatever, and to this extent

determined. Witness the full, small, and closely closing mouth.

His mind switched of a sudden to an incident long forgotten. His cheeks reddened.

The hark-back took him to an old gallery of frescoes and marbles. He was a lad of fourteen, and it was his first sight of Italy, indeed of Europe, he being abroad with his mother for the summer.

It was in a corridor of an old palace, he remembered. He, the boy from Kentucky, and she, the girl in marble, a bust on a pedestal, were alone. The marble was old, but the patrician Roman girl like himself, was young, witness the full, small mouth closely closing, the small high nose, the grave young severity. The boy had glanced about him, yielded to the madness seizing him, the immortal youth in him to the youth and beauty immortal in her, and started to kiss her. He had stopped, stayed in the act. Some sense within him had grasped the eternal sanctity of the individual creature, and glimpsed that for him to take what those small grave lips did not give, marble though these be, was to rape that youthful mouth of its immortalized virginity. The red upon the cheek of the man recalling burned dully anew.

Lucy beside him gazed on ahead. The agony of gladness that she felt at his coming this afternoon seemed to her the measure of her humiliation. It was as though the conquered, free woman at the wheels of her conqueror kissed her chains. And yet this Stephen by her side seemed to shame her, a person to life so friendly, and in honesty so superb. Against the abounding fullness of his nature, hers seemed meager, seemed furtive and ungenerous. Is woman at base less admirable then than man, the girl asked herself, that she

cloaks herself with dissimulations and dissemblings? Is she by nature, man's inferior in frankness and in courage? Or is this through heritage, her tragedy?

The mind of Stephen had switched again. He, this time, was standing between the borders of his mother's flowers, the grassy path dewy with the early morning. Garden scissors in hand, he was pausing before the blossoms he had been sent to cut, abashed before their perfection; milk-white phlox on tall stems of green; iris of crisp tissue, white, mauve, and faintly lemon; snapdragon rosy as aurora. It had seemed to him at the moment that no human creature is worthy the perfection of a perfect flower.

"Lucy," he turned abruptly to her, and his words came humbly and beseechingly, "God puts it into the heart of a man so to regard one woman, that he finds courage not in his worthiness, but in his necessity."

CHAPTER VIII

ANNE JANVIER came down the stairs of her town house at something before five o'clock the next morning, with her hat and jacket on, ready for the day's program. The front door was open, and Stephen, her nephew, was standing on the stone steps in the cool gray wet of the morning, bareheaded, and smoking a cigarette. Beyond him, the street brooded, silent and deserted.

"Where did you come from, Stephen? Did you stay in town last night? What do you want here?"

He flung away his cigarette, and came in. "I slept around the corner in our house. I had my key."

He kissed her lightly on the cheek, at which she looked at him sharply.

"Get it out, Stevie," she said.

"You, ma'am, are in this thing to-day, through what for you individually at the start, was the humor of the thing. Once there you found yourself pleased with the excitement you find in it, and with the prominence in it for you. In this issue that's up, this fight for the schools against the old ring, you're titillated with the uncertainty of whether you women are capable of putting it over. For you, the whole business is a new sensation. You were greatly bored anyhow, and in need of something novel. But why Lucy sacrificed to your conceit? Why Lucy as a tout?"

Anne, having placed her gloves and her bag upon

a chair, here stared at him, then gave way to mirth.

Stephen regarded her calmly. "I can't see why you shouldn't give me breakfast, ma'am? I'm here because I propose to go along, and assure myself you're wanted where you propose to be. You're a novelty not assimilated by the male voter in these parts, as yet."

Anne still was full of her mirth. Its cause was not so obvious. "Motor cars are deemed bad policy for certain neighborhoods, Stevie. Come along, guard your Una if you think best, especially from us heartless ones of her sex, who'd throw her to the lions. We're using the street car."

Lucy appeared on the landing, and came down the stairs.

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When the three left the house, not a soul other than themselves, was to be seen. The neighborhood was asleep, and their footsteps rang on the sidewalk. The pale sky above their heads was taking on the deepening tinge of full-arriving day. The dew on the lawns before the dwellings, and that which dripped from the trees along the curb, trees newly in full leaf, filled the air with a wet, cold sweetness.

Anne glanced at Stephen. Again she was visited by her mirth. Then with a liveliness touched with ecstasy, and meant for him, she spoke to Lucy.

"You, and your generation, take these crowding and amazing new departures, as they seem to my generation here in the south, so bluntly, so for granted? Frankly, I'm in a funk. I'm more relieved than I can tell you, that in my vast inexperience, you're with me."

Lucy nodded. "I wish I better knew these local conditions. I've worked, of course, and not a little; but this, you see, was in England, under grandmother's

militant friends. I marched in the Easter demonstration in London this year. Grandmother provided a banner for the occasion that read, 'Unfranchised America.' "

Anne with the tail of her eye on Stephen, misstepped off the curb into the gutter. They had reached a cross street, and were waiting for the approaching trolley.

* * * * * *

Anne and Lucy paused for a moment on the platform before entering the car. There were two passengers within, workmen with their dinner buckets, a white man, and a Negro. Lucy was for business.

"Wherever these two men are bound, they haven't registered."

The girl, as she might have stripped off jewels, had put away every hint of sex. She was matter-of-fact. It was Anne who looked appalled. Lucy went forward into the swaying car as she finished speaking, and Anne after a second of irresolution, and with a grimace over her shoulder at Stephen on the platform behind her, followed.

Are we, or not, free agents? Anne overtook Lucy in the aisle. The seats in the car ran lengthwise. The car lurched as it swung about a corner, and Anne sat down abruptly, beyond any volition with her, by the Negro man. Seeing this, Lucy went forward, and took her place near the young white workman.

The Negro was middle-aged. If any white creature south of the Ohio River knew the older portion of the colored race it was Anne. A second while she recovered from her plunge, and at some word from her, the Negro faced about, his face breaking into a broad smile, and as she continued to speak, himself fell to chuckling. God knows what she said, but whatever it was, it was

the right thing. Anne of all people, in a case such as this, was to be trusted. Stephen who had entered the car, at this went forward, and after a questioning interchange of glance with Lucy, sat down across the aisle from her and the young white workman.

* * * * * *

Are we, or not, in truth, free agents? Was the juxtaposition of these three at this moment, at something before six o'clock on a June morning in a common carrier, ordained from the beginning of things? These three young people, Lucy Wing, Stephen Janvier, and the man with the dinner bucket, whose fortunes, and whose destinies, and the destinies of those yet unborn, were from this moment, irretrievably commingled?

If not foreordained, then through what agent, or agency, came the conjunction? Was it determined fifty years before, when Mrs. Lucy Routt Wing, outraged by an overarrogant sense of masculinity in an old Episcopal bishop, took her initial step in conscious and affirmed femininity? Or was Anne Janvier the agent when she, on the evening of her daughter-in-law's ragtime dance, set herself to secure this granddaughter of Mrs. Wing for her companion to-day?

Since the young workman, the third in the group, started life half the width of the world from this town in Kentucky, what were the old-world conditions that so shaped the direction of his future, as to bring him to this part of the world, and to this encounter of this morning?

Lucy, turning and regarding the man, caught his eye. "I'm wondering if you'll let me tell you why I'm on my way this early in the morning to the polls at Franklin and Adams streets?"

Behind this act of Lucy, generation behind generation, race behind race, stood woman of all time, Anglo-Saxon, Celtic, Gallic, Teutonic, Slav, Tartar, Mongolian, Latin, Greek, Egyptian, Semitic; and overshadowing these generations of woman, stood eunuch, squire, duenna, gouverneur, and chaperon. Sudden-swift in the end was the liberation. Lucy, young, vivid, and composed, apparently alone at this hour of the day in a street car, spoke briskly and pleasantly to the young man.

He swung about. He wore a cheap suit of wool, and a cap of white cotton cloth with a visor of patent leather. A tin bucket with a tin cup fitted on the lid, sat upon his knee.

His answer in its good humor, and its assumption of entire equality, was unexpected. He was at his ease, and smiling.

"Sure, you may tell me. There's nothing I like better than the other side of almost anything, as the other side sees it."

One would say the man was in his early thirties. His upstanding hair, seen now as he pushed his cap back from his forehead, was as ingenuously flaxen as the down of a newly fledged duckling; his blue eyes on the contrary were disconcertingly keen; and his strongly built nose rippled unexpectedly below the bridge, this undulating outline carrying with it a suggestion of laughter.

Lucy gathered together her next words. "My friend and I," she nodded towards Mrs. Janvier farther down the car, "are busy in the interests of the local schools. We're trying to get our vote out to-day, and registered."

The man, still smiling, shrugged his shoulders. He

had strong and extremely white teeth in excellent condition. "That as well as anything. It's the point of view rather than the subject, you see, that will interest me."

Lucy glanced at him. One wonders just what were his speculations about her.

She gave her facts, keeping to the point. They were peculiar to the local situation.

After which he changed his dinner bucket from the one to the other knee, and said nothing.

Her color rose. She spoke sharply.

"You're married?"

He smiled. "Yes."

"You have children?"

"I have one."

"Of school age?"

"A boy, nine years old." He showed every smiling willingness to answer her questions; but of himself he proffered nothing.

She regarded him afresh, the line of her brows indrawn with a frown. Indignant at being resisted, one saw now that she at heart was imperious; an imperiousness, one would say, not alone of youth, but of class; of generations behind her accustomed to domination.

She spoke with impatience. "Can't you then for the sake of your son, see the points I make? Don't you agree that he has a right to the best that we—you and I—the taxpayers—shall agree among ourselves shall be given him?"

Her manner changed. Her brusqueness gave place again to briskness. "My name is Lucy Wing. I live at Ashe, a suburb. My grandmother pays taxes to a considerable sum on property here in the city. I'm in

this fight as her representative. I'm approaching you as a fellow taxpayer."

His teeth gleamed. "I'm Eugene Lelewel. No, there's nothing that your schools, ill-run or well-run, can offer my son that I'm willing he shall receive."

"I don't believe I understand."

His smiling amiability was the thing about him most provocative. Her brows were indrawn again, as he answered.

"How *can* you understand when you—I take it—are a product of the national idea that's responsible for your schools?"

"Explain."

He visibly was amused at this so complete reversal of the start, she who was so imperiously the instructor, seeking instruction of him. Her color heightened, and her lips tightened.

"You, even in *your* walk of life," he accompanied this placing of her with a smile, and a lift of his shoulders, "may have heard the term *Internationale?* Or its equivalent in this country, I. W. W.?"

She nodded briefly. She was offhand and unimpressed. "Oh, yes, England right now's full of 'em. Hyde Park at Easter when we were in London, was noisy with 'em. Italy has them too; there they call themselves Social Democrats, as we found as we came north from Egypt, held up as we were in Florence by railroad strikes. Our foreign mail yesterday, newspapers and magazines, is full of their last demonstration in France, plunging Paris into darkness. My grandmother refers to this last bit of activity in a letter in a local newspaper to-day."

He squared around, steadying his dinner bucket

with a hand, and viewing her now with undisguised curiosity.

The foreign-born population in Kentucky at that moment, was less than twelve per cent of the whole; the native-born, home-staying Kentuckian, had mild interest in the cabled items of foreign news, as reported in his local newspapers. The affairs of continental Europe at that time engrossed the average Kentuckian but very little more than the possible affairs of an inhabited Mars.

The man was reached at last. A ripple of some nature of feeling passed over his face. Was it a flash of triumph? Or was it amusement, as ironic as it was smiling?

"*Your* world then, does take some manner of note of *us,* and *our* world? Does concern itself in a little vital reading of the general world's pulse? May I be permitted to congratulate you and your grandmother?"

"Why can't our schools do anything for your son? What is it you're unwilling for him to receive?"

"I'm unwilling for one thing, that he shall receive your national habit of mind. There are no partitions up to now in my boy's mind, because neither I nor any one else have erected any there. He sees the world as he should see it, as one big room."

Stephen, across the aisle, saw Lucy lift her dark eyes, and look again at this chance companion. This companion with the silver-blond hair, and the sophisticated and amiable face, saw the look too, and laughed outright.

"An enemy to your schools is abroad to-day, that you did not include in your program. Yes, we're here in Kentucky, too; as we're coming to be everywhere.

There's nothing your schools can offer my son. Take numbers. If my son goes to your schools, he gets the decimal system. We *Internationales* prefer the metric system as more universal, as well as more scientific. I'm giving him the metric system as his standard of permanent values; any others, your decimal system among these, I give him as expedients which he is to master, ultimately to sweep away.

"Take history. Or as I show my son he should regard it, *perverted* history. Your schools offer him history not only unrelated, but as filtered through the national bias. I'm giving him history as a unit."

She was regarding him thoughtfully. "Will I meet many to-day who think as you?"

He glanced out the window behind him, and pressed the bell. "No. The few thinking as I do, into whom you may run, won't bother you. It fell in with my humor of the moment, you see, to show you our side. We prefer the present evil. We for the present, work against our ultimate aim, rather than *for* it. Successive defeats of the popular will by the machinery of existing governments will sooner bring about the overthrow of the governments as we hope to see these overthrown. We vote right now *with* these existing governments."

He laughed. "We would give the exploiters of your public utilities here in America, your abusers of special privilege, freer rein. We delight to see such policies as maintain in your municipal governments get their way. These things undermine the faith of the masses *in* their governments. We regret right now any too precipitate action. I lived about; in Vienna; in Italy; in Buenos Aires; in London; in Paris; in Moscow. Nowhere are we ready. Everywhere we have to edu-

cate our sons and daughters to an international habit of mind."

He laughed and stood up. The car had stopped. "I get off here."

Lucy rose herself. Mrs. Janvier and Stephen, on their feet, were waiting for her. The car had filled. The Negro man long since had gone. She followed her companions to the door. As the three of them, alighting, made for the curb, Anne spoke to Lucy. About them was a squalid neighborhood, invaded by modern plants and factories; their buildings towered, shining and new amid the levels of shabby frame cottages, corner groceries, and saloons.

"Can you see some roofs and water tanks beyond us there? On the street beyond this one? That's the brewery where we speak at noon for five minutes to the workmen. Old Mr. Weimar, the proprietor, whom I went myself to see about it, agreed that we should."

Lucy's erstwhile companion, the workman with his dinner bucket, was taking the curb just ahead of them, and turned at this, swinging off his cap, his blonde hair shining in the sunshine, as with a nod to Lucy, his glance took in her companions. Replacing the cap, he gained the sidewalk, turned into the cross street, and was gone.

* * * * * *

Stephen for the second time to-day got off the cross-town car at Laurel and Franklin; and for the second time made his way along Franklin to the intersection of Adams. Pausing here on the sidewalk across from the bakery wherein was the registration booth, he took his stand on the curb. Anne and Lucy, on being relieved at noon by other women workers, were to have lunch with him downtown.

They appeared in time and crossed the street, approaching him. "We've our date at the brewery," Anne said; "we can't go with you yet."

"I thought I'd go with *you*."

"Oh."

* * * * * *

Mr. Weimar apparently was as good as his word. The three, as they entered the main doorway of the plant, were met by the manager, as stolid and heavy as the buildings of the brewery itself. Bells and whistles were announcing noon, as the four emerged on an inner court, where they found the workmen already pouring into the place through two great archways.

They came stolidly, some few putting on their coats as they came, an unhandsome lot on the whole, and in need of shaving. Stephen and Lucy stood with the manager to one side of the doorway through which the four had come; Anne took her place upon the step. It put her a couple of feet above the level of the courtyard, the men ranged about her in a semicircle, two and even three deep.

Anne was a charming woman; one not above profiting by and through this charm when she felt the need, and saw the way. There was something irresistibly pleasing in this irregular face of hers, and its quizzical play. She strove to profit by these things in herself now. Where she stressed her words, she smiled:

"It's an insult, of course, to *any* man, to believe it's possible to influence his vote as he may have *planned* it; *provided* the man himself knew all the *facts* in the case in question. Mr. Weimar has agreed that I may take five minutes of your time to-day, and for which I *thank you,* and *him.* I want to rehearse to you certain facts *about* our schools. I am sure those of you who've

already registered, will be willing to hear me rehearse these facts quickly, for the benefit of those who will go this noon, or later, to *register*. I——"

A man in a cheap wool suit, wearing a cap of white cotton cloth with a visor of patent leather, stepped out of the line of the semicircle. It was Lucy's companion of the morning. He threw up a hand mildly, if one can so convey the sense of good humor that went with the act.

Anne broke off. "You wish to say something?"

He swung his cap off easily. "Somebody's ahead of you. It's only fair we tell you so. These men, myself with them, were given an hour—ten to eleven—and told what to do."

It was Eugene Lelewel speaking. His manner conveyed no venom, rather that dryness which is kin to humor.

* * * * * *

Stephen sat at luncheon with his two guests. He was arguing. "But, my dearest auntie, *don't* blame old Mr. Weimar. Blame yourself for the position you, his old neighbor, put him in. The local machine that's fighting you in this matter of the schools, controls every licensed saloon in the city, and most of the road houses in the county. Mr. Weimar runs a brewery."

Anne still was very angry. "I'm obliged to you, Stephen, for finding the man for me in the general exodus, and thanking him. You say he's a foreman in the cooperage plant?"

Lucy looked up from her salad. "Does this mean that he'll lose his place?"

Stephen couldn't say. "I'm speculating as to that myself. I asked him for his address, and told him I'd look him up."

He leaned forward. "Tell me the truth, Lucy. Are you horrifically tired?"

She showed surprise, as if this was a new viewpoint for the modern young person, from which to see herself. "I don't believe I get tired. I don't seem to recall it if I do. I'm the hopelessly robust sort, always well. Do you mean I *ought* to be tired?"

He turned to Mrs. Janvier. He beamed. "Auntie, lend yourself to me for the afternoon. Go with me."

"Can't, my boy; I'm due back at headquarters to relieve the field workers. I won't get home until night. Go with you where?"

"To see Aunt Philippa. Shall *we* go, Lucy?"

Anne put down her tea glass. "Lucy, listen to me. Stephen, where our sex is concerned, is a reactionary."

" 'Fore God I'm not, Lucy. Here's gratitude; after giving this aunt of mine, as I have, the most of my day!"

Anne arose, and gathered up her gloves and her bag from the chair beside her. "Turn him down, Lucy; he's the reverse of the shield; like his great-aunt Philippa, he's a hark-back. Turn him down."

Lucy smiled. "But you see, I *want* to go. I call her *Aunt* Philippa, myself. We motored down five years ago before I went away to school, and I haven't seen Aunt Philippa since."

"Foiled, Missus, foiled!" Thus Stephen. He turned to Lucy.

"It'll get us back to Ashe late, of course. Shall I—or do you prefer—to telephone before we start, to your grandmother?"

CHAPTER IX

THE two, Stephen and Lucy, had something over thirty miles to cover of limestone pike, a highway venerable with traditions of years as these things are reckoned in Kentucky; which now climbing, and now momentarily dropping, the while steadily ascended, traversing an upland country given over to agriculture. A country it was, characterized by numberless streams, by great sycamores that ever love a well-watered region, and by gray bridges. The high ridges traveled every while, backbones of the innumerable watersheds, afforded views of far-spreading country.

It was past four when the roadster turned off the highway. Speeding in this new direction, they brought up shortly before tall gates, large grounds, and a group of buildings.

Lucy's interest as they entered was tinged with an eager concern. "Yes, I've kept it in my mind as it is; the shrine, the grotto, the walks; the beds of geraniums, and heliotrope, and gladioli; the meticulousness rather than the beauty."

Stephen helped her out before the main building. They had telephoned before starting, and were expected. The door opened as they reached it, and a little sister with eyes shyly smiling a welcome from under a white forehead-band, took them in charge. She was past middle age, yet with her shyness, and her

hands folded in front of her within the long sleeves, she suggested perpetual youth.

She led the way along a central hall. The floor beneath the feet was waxed and polished. As Lucy remembered it, there had been a strip down the center of cocoa matting, harsh to the feet, and a painted floor.

The little portress tapped at a door, then threw it open. "They are here, Mother."

Her face in its shy pleasure as she turned to the two seemed to reflect some of the brightness of their own youth. It was evident that she and Stephen were old friends, and that her pleasure in Lucy, was hardly less.

"It's Sister Veronica!" said Lucy, suddenly. The little portress smiling, nodded, and was gone.

Mother Mary Gertrude, known to the world she left behind her, as Philippa Janvier, had turned about in a swivel chair from the desk where she was busied. Her face like that of the portress was framed in snow-white linen, and as she rose and came to meet them, there was a rustle of her robes, and a swinging out and back against her skirts of her rosary beads.

She was brisk and portly, seventy-five years old and not looking it, a woman in whom vigor was a more abiding quality than grace. The room about her suggested in part an office, and in part an audience-room. Its two windows looked out upon a side yard and the tops of lilac bushes, with a sky seen through the tree tops of forget-me-not blue, over-traveled by white clouds touched with radiance.

Smiling as she came forward with both her hands out to Lucy, she took and held those of the girl full a moment in her own. Looking her over, up and down, she spoke.

"When I saw you for the first time in your life, my

dear, dear child, it was in this room. You were quite a little girl, probably around six years old; with amazing crimson cheeks, and a monstrous doll in your arms, the apple—it was easy to see this—of your grandmother's eyes."

The reverend mother's voice was singularly pleasant and composed. She released the girl's hands.

"Sit here on the sofa, Lucy. Now, Stephen, you know very well I'm not going to let you kiss me. Why go through the form of attempting it every time you come down here to see me? I'll take your hands, both of them, since you insist. You're no better behaved than always, I see."

The eyes beneath the white forehead-band, they were amber eyes flecked with gray, were going from the young man, her nephew, to the girl now seated on the sofa. If she was surprised that these two were come here to see her together, she gave no sign.

Each eye reads for itself. The old nun who had been of the world in her day was skilled at reading character. It had been her business so to do for many years.

She took a likeness for herself of this granddaughter of Lucy Routt Wing. Withal a man's woman, not a woman's, she told herself; in this resembling her grandmother. Sure to attract; cold to this knowledge now; a creature to whom it might come in time, however, to use her charm and her cleverness to sway men's passions.

She took her seat on a straight chair. "Tell me about your grandmother, Lucy! Has she come home this time to stay? I judge she's as violent as ever in her stands, from the communications over her name, I see from time to time, in our papers. You look sur-

prised? You suppose then that I don't keep up with the world?"

The granddaughter laughed. The thought of her grandmother's sallies into print introduced into this guarded dovecote amused her not a little; concerned as these were with issues such as the age of consent, birth control, a common standard in sex morality, and matters of like nature.

"Grandmother's more than ever convinced that the feminine quantity admitted into world affairs thus far masculine is to regenerate the world. She contends that male and female in every sense is the normal state, the law of nature. Her intensity never slackens, it only grows. She's come to be actually niggardly, Aunt Philippa."

She here laughed outright. "Our place at Ashe is shabby; outrageously so. Miss Kitty and I have to fight merely to get the front gates painted. Everything saved above what grandmother calls our necessities, goes to such organizations as she's assured in her own mind are furthering the feminist cause on this side of the Atlantic, or the other."

Mother Mary Gertrude in her stiff straight chair nodded comprehendingly. Her face within its banded setting was enlivened with a shrewdness which is the fruit of a sound humor.

"At the opposite poles all our lives, Lucy Routt and myself! Mountain defying mountain across the valley of decision, not more immovable than she and I in our respective stands throughout the sixty-odd years of our intimacy! Well, it's something for an average maintained one way and another, I suppose, that heaven does so center its opposing forces."

The old *religieuse* laughed with hearty enjoyment.

"The *new woman* is not the only one of her sex who follows an idea, Lucy, though Lucy Routt Wing would have you think so. This school with which you associate me, is among the oldest schools for girls in the south."

The person, voice, manner, and carriage, of the old nun changed. She was her *office;* and also as it proved, she was *the scion of her line!*

"Do you chance to know the story of the French ladies at Port Royal, my child? Well, that's better than I hoped of the modern education. Two of my blood, the Janvier-Arnauld blood, were part with the movement with other great ladies in appointing themselves the guardians of the morals and manners of France."

She spoke with the placidity which at base is authority. "I've been here in this, my chosen Port Royal of the western world, for forty-nine years; a self-appointed guardian, as might be, of the morals and manners of the south. Five decades of graduates have gone out from under my direction, and my jurisdiction."

Each word at this, came clear and impressive: "The aim with the group of devoted women who serve here from time to time with me is to make *a shrine of each of these young hearts, wherein its owner as her part in life, shall guard the flame of the home; the home, as we endeavor to have each pupil see, being the soul of a people; and a people without a soul, being already dead!* This evening when you get back to Ashe, tell Lucy Routt I told you this. I can hear the sniff with which she'll receive it!"

Mother Gertrude laughed again with heartiness; then again became grave. "Do not imagine, Lucy,

that it is any negligible thing—*the integrity of the home;* which we handful of contemplative women within these walls dedicate ourselves to defend. Seeing to it that always throughout the twenty-four hours of the day, one of our number is on her knees before the altar in prayer; including in these prayers, the thousand thousands of women throughout the world, who find their privileged vocation *in the home.*"

A sternness touched the old nun's face and her utterance, as in arraignment of enemy forces visible to the eye of her mind. "These women of the millions of homes are not vocal, Lucy. Things of the spirit are not so easily voiced. Creatures of instinctive abnegation these millions of home-makers are, who too often in their routine service for others, forget to pray for themselves."

She took a sprightlier tone. "I'm vain-glorious, Lucy, a cardinal sin. Estimating highly as I do, the French blood that is in me, I take pride that this school, that was old when I became its head, is of transplanted French inception. We *émigré* blood in America, following, not supplanting, the French blood of the explorer and settler who came earlier, stand for something in the character building of this country, believe me, my child."

Humor shone from the resolute eyes. "The tall pyramids of meringues and macaroons, the spun-candy edifices that distinguished our banquet tables in days earlier than you know of, our sauces and our forty soups, are not all of high living we brought with us to the social life we came into; as Lucy Routt once assured me they were. Nor yet our cellars of old sherry, sauternes and clarets, and our rich cordials; nor our iron balconies, our frescoed ceilings and pan-

eled walls, our chandeliers, mirrors and sconces. Repeat these enumerations to Lucy Routt, if you will."

The old nun had all the manner now, with its smiling insouciance, and also its charm, of a woman of the great world. "We brought with us other things too, my dear. A grace, a spirit, a culture, yes; and a refinement that has lingered wherever we have been in any degree, a factor. Philadelphia, Baltimore, St. Louis, Louisville, New Orleans, Charleston with its strain of Huguenot, bear witness to what I say. These among our American cities have a charm, a social tradition, a grace of living, that lingers.

"This region about us here was a center, at its start, of French *émigré* colonization. The very landscape still seems to partake something of the serene loveliness of the France I learned to know when as a young woman I was taken there by my father; even as our dwellings and our churches hereabout show the French influence in their architecture."

The notes of a bell, low-toned and softly pealing, came through the open windows on the air now grown mellow with evening.

The mother arose. One realized with surprise that she was short and rather stout, not tall.

"The girls of the school will be assembling, Lucy, and I would like you to come with me and see them. Some come to us as early as six years old. The dear Lord for reasons of His own always permits some to be left motherless. The most are around eighteen when they leave us. In two days now they all go home for the summer vacation.

"Stephen, get yourself a book from the bookcase yonder. Oh, he'll find considerable that's modern, Lucy. Just as in the roll of our teachers, more than

one name, Sister Teresa, Sister Catherine, Sister Bridget, is followed by a B. A., or a B. S."

She spoke again to Stephen. "I shall take Lucy from chapel to see the garden. Sister Veronica then is coming with some of our late strawberries for you both, and a pitcher of our cream, and bread and fresh butter. That, Lucy, is what Stephen loved for his supper when he was a little fellow, and spent one week of every summer with me here during the vacation. And a plate, too, of our clover-honey, wasn't it, Stephen? And a slice of our homemade cheese?"

Stephen who had risen with the two addressed his great-aunt. "When I first met Lucy Wing, it was in this room too. She sat here, on this straight-backed, wooden-bottomed chair, beneath sweet Saint Geneveva and her halo, and her babe, and her mild-eyed succoring doe. An intimidating young person, she looked me over without enthusiasm, out of large, round eyes. She had impeccable black curls, and as you, ma'am, will agree, the cheeks of the young ladies on the covers of the fifteen-cent magazines, are not more highly colored than were her own. She never melted; never faltered; never relented in her gaze turned on me. I think I must have accepted then, the challenge in that gaze. I want you to know, Aunt Philippa, I have taken it up anew."

CHAPTER X

LUCY stood with Mother Mary Gertrude at one side of the chapel doorway, and watched the school pass in. Two and two they came, the youngest pupils first, the procession ending with the oldest girls. The line, as it passed, glanced at Lucy, and as quickly withdrew its eyes.

Following behind her companion in her flowing heavy robes of black, her veil floating lightly behind her, Lucy entered the chapel at the end of the procession, and took her place beside the mother on a bench. The young voices, clear and high, lifted in a hymn.

A myriad thoughts, comprehensions, and points of view, came upon Lucy. She hitherto had thought of her Aunt Philippa with a sense of wonder and pity. That a personality so vigorous, should find its destiny in immurement, only had befogged her. The school of which she thought rarely, and never as a factor in her Aunt Philippa's life, meant to her confining walls, bare floors, pupils in uniforms cut to a pattern, with downcast eyes which to her, suggested hypocrisy. The whole had seemed drab and inadequate.

To her newer comprehension, these young girls gathered here from various sections, were *the vehicles for an idea.* Each of these young women as she left this school, was in symbol, the bearer of a symbolic flame, of which the home was to be the temple; and this young

woman, the priestess. Lucy was overcome by the profoundness of the idea.

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She followed Mother Gertrude along a path which stretched ahead, the length of the garden. When had she seen so many well-nigh forgotten, homely flowers? Four-o'clock, bleeding heart, touch-me-not, cockscomb; fuchsia, tuberose, lemon verbena, heliotrope; in beds and borders. Flowers and ideas then, discarded elsewhere, were cherished here? Were they a survival? Or were they a reserve?

The branches of some cherry trees overhung the garden wall, which was of brick, and grown with ivy. The varnished fruit with which the trees were laden, gleamed amid the leaves, crimson-black, scarlet, and waxy-white, according to the variety. There was a rockery midway of the flower beds, a finger of water trickling over the stones; and at the end of the walk, there was a summer house.

Mother Gertrude left Lucy to go and speak to a man at work among the flowers; an old man with a stubby reddish-gray beard.

These things on which Lucy gazed as she waited, she saw as things she knew, the verifications of her earlier impressions. That they existed, this garden, the wide grounds, the surrounding great farm; the group of buildings; the barns, stables, and dairy; that these were here, the outer shell of an active and energizing idea, *this* was new and arresting!

Her Aunt Philippa, and the gardener, were speaking in French. The man, as Lucy here recalled, was an Alsatian who had come to America in the '70's, and had been in the employ of the school ever since.

Many strains, and many leavens, then, enter into the

making of this great southland of hers! Lucy was prone to think of one strain only, as belonging to those pioneer days of the start. Her mind ran back always to that one of her own forbears, old John Henry Wing, the Indian fighter. He, under General Evan Shelby, in a company of Kentucky backwoodsmen renowned for expert marksmanship, at the battle of Point Pleasant, at the mouth of the Great Kanawha; where Chief Cornstalk, the ally of the British, was killed, and his forces of the northwest Indians were routed, fought, and won, *the first battle of the American Revolution.* Or so she had been taught by Colonel Tecumseh Craig, to believe.

Or she thought of another John Henry Wing, the son of the first John; who in another company of Kentucky backwoodsmen, marched against, and routed, Chief Tecumseh, a brother of Chief Cornstalk, at Detroit, in 1812—the grandfather of Colonel Tecumseh, being one of this company of Kentuckians; and the grandson bearing the great chief's name.

On Lucy's every hand at this present moment, was a potent and still virile French survival! She turned and followed her old friend, the Aunt Philippa of her childhood, back between the flower beds, towards the group of buildings.

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The two, Lucy and Stephen, left the convent gates in the lingering afterglow. In time they turned off the old highway into a less traveled road, which carried them across country, to the pike leading to Ashe.

It was a narrow thoroughfare, shut in by trees, and bordered now with ferny, grassy banks, and again with wayside weeds and bloom. These already damp with

the approaching night, gave out a cool and aromatic odor. When the car passed a culvert, or rushed over a railless bridge that spanned one of the innumerable small rills, the low ground sent up the fragrance of mint. Speeding on through the gathering dusk, the two were aware, each of them, that as life's superlative moments are counted, these hours they were sharing, were golden.

As they reached the end of the day's journeying for Lucy, the electric light upon the porch was switched on, and Mrs. Wing stood at the top of the steps. Sharp-featured in the revealing light, tiny, with her darting keen gaze, she suggested some wee, but fierce old hawk, welcoming this nestling whose return to the nest she awaited.

At the sight of the tiny old figure, and in the light of Lucy's recent fuller knowledge of her grandmother's earlier cheated life, a thousand confirming testimonies of the past rushed on the girl. A thousand yearning and aching emotions overcame her, born of kinship and affection, of the sweetness of long dependence, of the attitude of child for parent. She knew the arrogance within this old heart, and long had grasped some of the bitterness there. It was as though out of the wide and ample horizon of the start, there stretched an ever-narrowing road, the thousand rays of the start, centering at the close, on a single object, and this herself, the great-grandchild.

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Lucy joined her grandmother at the interrupted dinner table. Miss Kitty McKane, bleached and rouged and powdered, draped with chain and lorgnon, and wearing a dress with the Paris stamp, made one of the three about the table. Whatever Lucy had to

say, was said, at all times, and without hesitation, before her.

"Grandmother, why did Aunt Philippa take orders? The Janviers apparently look upon themselves as a big part, if not the whole thing, in the *Episcopal* diocese. She says she's been for forty-nine years at the school of Our Lady."

Mrs. Wing looked up. She was eating her habitual evening meal, whatever the variety prepared for others at her table: crusty French bread broken into milk, rich and yellow, partaken from a silver bowl. On the thin-worn bright old bowl, was the well-nigh obliterated coat-of-arms of the Calverts of colonial Maryland. This one bit of old silver linked Mrs. Wing with her own forbears, and she greatly prized and cherished it.

She answered the question. "In Washington, not many blocks from the school you attended for four years, is a statue of a Union general. It's entirely an atrocious thing, all epaulets, and buttons, and male vanity. You passed it many times. It's your answer. Philippa and her people were damnable rebels. She would not marry a man bearing arms against her blood. A year after the break between the two, about the time of Bull Run, he married a northern woman with a fortune. The termination of the affair drove Philippa, on the contrary, back to the school where as a girl, she was sent for her French and music. Does it occur to you, Lucy, how few were the vocations or avocations, offered a single woman of family, prior to the '70's? You have the story. There's nothing good ever came of war, nothing good ever will, and women always are the chief sufferers."

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Stephen outstretched on a wicker couch within a

screened porch open to the starlit night was talking with his mother. She, at his command, was in a chair beside him, his outstretched hand holding hers.

"Aunt Philippa rode her high horse this afternoon in great style, Port Royal, and all that. Mummy, she's a great old girl. It does get under the skin and tingle the blood, to consider a lifetime given to an end believed in."

"Your Aunt Philippa, Stephen, is one of the unrecognized big women of her time. The south has had its full share of these. I like to think of such women, and of their influence, silent, steady, still, productive, like growth. We need these; need more of them than we have, often I think."

The son drew the hand he held, to his lips. He loved this not always vocal parent, deeply and ardently. Helen went on.

"Has it occurred to you, big son, that the largely unsung women of the south during the Civil War did more than clothe and feed the army of the Confederacy? We were short in man-power from the start, and the women left at home, perforce were the administrators. Have you realized that when the men of the south returned to the farms and the plantations after the surrender at Richmond, they found these women, who, bereft of authority over the negroes yet were surrounded with a population of them, nonproductive and dependent, who must eat and exist, had instituted a system for the cultivation of the land in small parcels, and on shares? Which in despite of the destructive work of the horrors of reconstruction, is the working system of the agricultural south to-day?"

"The wise parent that it is! Herself one of the silent, stilly ones! Neither a follower, nor a leader

she, in these present, yeasty, restless feminine days. But just—oh, so comfortably for those around her—beautifully and graciously content to be! Lean nearer to me, Mummy, closer a bit, and I'll kiss you."

"How does the lovely girl wear, son? Lucy, I mean. For she is—oh, my dear—she truly is lovely to look on."

Stephen sat up. Helen heard the quick indrawing of his breath.

"She's an entity, mother. She's something, and she's somebody. I'm overwhelmed with the temerity of myself in setting to win her. I am, oh, I am, Mummy, and yet I've just this to do. What a woman she is to make! In the years ahead what a creature she'll be. She's feeling her way now. She's looking all about her. When the time comes for her to shine in the fullness of her conscious power, it will be with her own distinct brilliancy."

A silence followed, intimate and profound. Then,

"Mummy?"

"Yes?"

"There's an elderly colored woman at Mrs. Wing's, unmistakably a personage, by name Ellen Jackson. Her brother is Jerry Jackson, our one-time gardener."

"Yes?"

"What is it that's evading me? What ought I to know about these two? Is there any story?"

"There are two stories. Your cousin Tecumseh, according to one story, says their mother was brought to Jekyl's Island from Africa, as late as '49. He tells this only because it gives an opportunity to add that a private yacht owned by a northern man brought the cargo over. It's a hark-back to things we of this generation would like to forget."

"What's the other story? There's no echo to this one in my mind."

"The second story includes Miss Kitty McKane, and also sheds light on one of the many sides to Mrs. Wing. As a source for anecdote and local color alone, she's a benefaction to her community." Helen smiled.

"Here it is as told me when I came here. She, as you know, was a violent Unionist. Kentucky was divided in its allegiance. It was her boast that for every man of her Kentucky connection by blood or by marriage, who entered the southern army, she would send a recruit into the Union army. The day her husband, and with him, her son, her only child, put on the Confederate gray, she made good her boast by pairing them.

"The road house at the crossroads at that time was run by an Irishman, newly come over, by name Michael McKane. He was a widower, with two little daughters, Kitty and Rosaleen. He ran the road house, and looked after his two children, with the aid of two negro servants he owned, man and wife, the parents of your Ellen and Jerry Jackson, and of a younger child named 'Celie.

"What Mrs. Wing's methods of persuasion were, nobody knew. But the day that McKane and his negro man joined the Union army, the two daughters of McKane, who was a Roman Catholic, were entered by Mrs. Wing at the school of Our Lady, where you've been this afternoon. And the negro woman and her three children went to live in a cabin on the Wing farm. Kitty, the eldest of the McKane children, had the name of being a fine girl. The story went that she faced Mrs. Wing, on the day her father left, and with the terrible frankness of childhood, asked her if *she*

was God, that she dared make widows and orphans?

"McKane was killed at Chancellorsville. And whatever the fate of the father of Ellen and Jerry and 'Celie, he never returned to his family. When the news came of the death of McKane, Mrs. Wing drove the forty miles to the school, and begged the pardon of Kitty McKane.

"Whatever her faults, she never minimized her obligations in these two instances. She made Kitty. She had her taught expert needlework, and built up a clientele for her as a young seamstress. Later she bought out the business of Madame Leroy, and put Kitty at the head of it, and let her gradually take it over. Rosaleen, the younger child, found her own vocation. She is little Sister Veronica, the portress at Our Lady.

"In the other instance, she took Ellen, the oldest of the three negro children, into her own house. Long her personal attendant, her position a peculiar and a favored one, Ellen has traveled pretty much over the world. Jerry, the boy, came here to your grandfather and got his training. How it came about we never knew. 'Celie, the third child, married. Julius Buck, your ragtime genius at the big drum, is one of her children. 'Celie herself is dead. I'm exhausted. Volubility's not my line."

CHAPTER XI

ON a morning toward the end of June, Helen Janvier came downstairs to breakfast, with reason to know that her son had preceded her. She smiled, loving to hear him as now, while he waited for her to appear, strum the piano. That he loved music, did not prevent his performance on the keyboard, like his singing, from being poor.

The piano was in the living room which opened off the hall. From his place on the music bench he could see the stairway. He rose, and came to meet her.

On every hand was a predominance of ivory-toned woodwork and gay chintzes. Glass doors at the rear of the hall looked on Helen's flower garden. The dining room was opposite the living room. Visible beyond it, was a breakfast room, the table set with china, glass, and silver, and a bowl of riotously gay-hued foxglove.

Mother and son as they went in together, his arm about her waist, exhaled an air of gayety and cheer, like their gay-printed chintzes, and their vistas of walks and garden. Both looked fresh and invigorated; she exquisitely so, with her smoothly dressed hair and firm skin; he aboundingly so.

She took her place at the head of the table. A maid placed fruit plates, and brought in a bowl of big red plums. Through the broad windows, their sashes open, was a far view of country.

"Mother?"

"Yes?"

"I mayn't be here for dinner. I'm due at Ashe for the afternoon, and if I'm pressed in the least to stay, why, I'll stay."

He laughed, and she smiled.

He made no concealment of his condition of energetic swain. And because Helen never intruded, never pressed a right to know, never indeed at any time had pressed such a right, he told her all. All that any creature tells another, save the one.

And she listened, smiled, and—*suffered*. The last, he in common with his sex in these matters, never suspected.

How is it that the best women are the perfect dissemblers? Stephen when he came to Helen with his raptures and his rhapsodies, never saw that she often was quite pale and tired. Never dreamed that there is another than the lover's jealousy; as passionate and as sickening; as full of torment, pain, and impotent suffering; the jealousy suffered by the woman with the certain knowledge that she must surrender the son she has borne; must concede him to another woman.

"Mother, what an indefatigable old sport Mrs. Wing is. Do you recall the story I told you of a man named Eugene Lelewel?"

"I remember. Did he lose his place at the Weimar brewery?"

"He did. And that's the point. Since I looked him up, and found he was fired, I've been seeing a bit of him. Truth to tell, I don't think he wants the place back. I could have arranged it. He's a curious find. I went by his house the other evening in my car, and he took me with him to a workingman's club."

"Well?"

"He lives in one of those shabby cross streets, that are sure to be hot in summer, and cold in winter. He, his wife, and their child, a boy, have the upstairs half of a two-story house. Life in the neighborhood seems all in the open, every family at its windows or its door, except the children who were in the street."

"And all this leads where?"

"Nowhere very much except that the man is unusual, and interests me. And to tell you that Mrs. Wing demands she meet him. She wrote him a note which she gave me to deliver, in appreciation of his act that noon at the brewery, and asked him to come and see her. The outcome is that he, his wife and son, come to Ashe this afternoon on the trolley, and I'm to be of the party. I warned Mrs. Wing that she'll find the wife whom I met, less to her mind than the husband. But she'd none of it. 'I find the proletariat interesting in any and all of its manifestations,' she told me tartly; 'the true proletariat like the real aristocrat, has the courage always to be himself, and herself.' "

* * * * * *

Stephen appeared at Ashe that afternoon. The Lelewels were arrived ahead of him, and Eugene and his son were just then crossing the lawn, to present themselves to Mrs. Wing.

This person was established pleasantly to the eye. The day was the hottest thus far of the season, and she was settled in her chair, with her footstool and her cane, and her three canine friends near by, in the deep shade of a catalpa tree to the right of the lawn. Ancient and twisted and gnarled of mighty trunk the tree was, but hearty; its branches far-flung; a giant of its kind, probably unmatched in the state.

Stephen followed Eugene and the boy across the grass. As he reached the group, Lelewel was urging his son to put his hand in Mrs. Wing's extended and slightly tremulous one. As the man's ingenuously downy hair was at variance with his keen eyes, so were his cheap clothes at odds with his manner, which was smiling and at ease.

"'Umph!" Mrs. Wing dropped the hand of the child, and addressed the father. "You better send him out to me and let me build him up for a while on country milk and country eggs."

The boy who was nine years old, as Stephen knew, was of a fragile and sensitive appearance. He was an odd little fellow on the whole, with a white face and a too thin body, his shirt waist of striped pink-and-white percale, and his woolen knickerbockers, seemingly too large for him, and his stockings sagging about his meager calves. His eyes in their peculiar gravity however—they were gray behind well-defined lashes—gave an unforgettable individuality to the face. A pronounced gravity it was, as though life thus far had left an overtroubled impress upon a sensitive mind.

"Well, Stephen?" Mrs. Wing extended a hand to this person. "Sit down in the cane chair there, and make friends with the boy. Mr. Lelewel, I'm indeed glad to see you. I've wandered about European capitals for sixty-odd years, and know a cosmopolite when I meet one. Thank God, I've one to exchange a word with this afternoon. These tourist Americans such as Stephen here, know as much of European politics as they know of government in ancient Thebes."

She pointed Eugene to a place beside her, and settled herself with zest, turning toward the visitor expectantly. What she expected from him, or wanted of

him, she probably could not have said, beyond the fact that any variety of human nature was to her worthy of her zeal, so that it meant the subjugation of another's personality to her own.

She turned with something of her old fire on Eugene. A lively and consummate flatterer she was, though never with her own sex, contemptuous of it as she was as a rule, and as a rule as generously hated by this sex.

"What does this news in the afternoon papers mean, young man? What, in your opinion, is back of these shots fired from that sidewalk in Sarajevo? Back of this killing of the Austrian heir-apparent, and that morganatic wife of his? Is the devil to pay in Europe as a consequence? Is it a match to the powder magazine of that always damnable eastern situation? My father served his government as a diplomat in eastern Europe for fifteen years when I was a girl, and young woman. I knew and know, Belgrade, Bucharest, Prague, Vienna; I know the Dalmatian coast, and Greece. I've a right to say that I'm interested. Now tell me what *you* know?"

Lucy and Mrs. Lelewel who, a moment since, had come out of the house together, here approached across the grass, accompanied by Stephen who had gone to meet them. Lucy, whatever her good will toward the visitor with her, plainly was fulfilling her duties awkwardly. One would say that Mrs. Eugene being on her hands, she didn't know what to do with her.

This person on her part, was openly eager, openly curious, her eyes roaming about her without concealment. Around twenty-six or seven, one would say, tall, deep-bosomed, and free in her carriage, her face was made up like a cocotte. An effect which, heightened as it was, by long earrings and a picture hat, did not for

one moment conceal the fact that here, showy and eager, petulant and undisciplined, was a child.

She wore a skirt and coat, the jacket thrown open, and a transparent blouse, through which showed the lace and ribbons of a showy camisole. One gathered that the afternoon had promised much; that the blouse which was new, the camisole, and even the picture hat, possibly had been purchased for the occasion. One gathered also, that Mrs. Lelewel's alarmed vanity, so visibly on the defensive, would be quick to take offense.

Lucy in her class sympathies, as in her intellectual ones, as yet was narrow. Whereas the older Lucy, spry old body, was catholic in her relations. With much tartness and directness but little arrogance, except for her own class for whom she wagged a caustic tongue, she as she herself put it, had been a wanderer about the world too long to be impressed by the claims of anybody. She surveyed Mrs. Lelewel, and proceeded to put her to the fore.

"As great a traveler, are you, Mrs. Lelewel, as I understand your husband is? Did you come with him to America?"

These seemed humorous suppositions to Mrs. Eugene. Her laugh, like her manner, was defensive. "I guess I'm as good an American as anybody here. 'Gene married me ten years this June right out of high school in Cincinnati. How about it, 'Gene?"

'Gene, however, had taken his son by the hand and led him to Lucy, who more at ease with the boy than with the mother, put out her hand, and spoke.

"This is the little son you told me of?" Then to the boy, "And what is your name?"

The child who was painfully awkward, pushed for-

ward at this by his father, looked up. A slow-mounting pink suffused the pallor of his face.

"My name is Andrey Lelewel," he said, looking at her. Then quite unexpectedly he bowed from his waist. It was odd, with a suggestion of foreignness, and quaintly pleasing.

And with this he again gazed at her. Plainly the boy was dazed, plainly bewildered, with wonderment and a gathering delight, in what he looked on. His eyes up-lifted, seemed to say here was the most lovely thing their owner ever gazed on.

And probably it was. Lucy of late, seemed to have arrived at the dazzling completeness of her young beauty. So happy was she these days, that the narrowness of her joy before Stephen came into her life, frightened her. Rebelling no longer, she from day to day, was letting herself be carried forward with the resistlessness as of mighty waters. Stephen's eyes seeking hers, a moment since when he came to meet her and Mrs. Lelewel, she experienced a sense of incredible happiness. His eyes then sweeping her, he had smiled. And she had smiled back. There is no joy such as that coming from a knowledge that we please.

As she stood here now, her eyes, her brows, and her hair dark; her skin white, and her color to-day beyond compare; a sprig of green leaves that she held in her fingers, picked up as she came across the lawn, and which gleamed dark and glossy against their whiteness, seemed to relate her, as a flower to its setting, to the green of the turf and the trees about her.

Almost one could see Andrey's little heart beneath the pink-and-white shirt waist, beating with its intensity

as he gazed at her; this thin little boy in his over-large clothes; one did see the rapture in his up-lifted face.

Lucy blushed, who rarely did so; wearing also a look of sweet embarrassment, who rarely was confused. It was evident to the group who watched the little scene that the girl was touched, even was moved.

Then since the boy went on gazing at her, she stooped, took his hand, and laughingly led him off with her across the grass towards the distant flower borders, a homely little fellow with heavy and lifeless flaxen hair, pointing out to him as they went, the pigeons strutting and pecking on the drive.

Mrs. Lelewel watched them go, then laughed shortly. "Will you look at that now! And Andrey always holding back from strangers. What do you make outer that, 'Gene?"

Mrs. Wing tapped her footstool with her cane. This was *her* party, and as such she regarded herself as its center. The attention thus brought back to herself, her gaze went from the husband to the wife, and back to the husband.

"While my granddaughter's gone, I want to say to you both, that I'm sorry it should be through kindness to Mrs. Janvier and my child, that you lost your place at the brewery. May I say further that I'm worried, and very much would like to know how you're getting on?"

Mrs. Eugene, bold and yet childlike in her alarmed self-esteem, glanced at Stephen. Finding his gaze resting on her, in just what sense she wasn't quite sure, she bridled, and her attention came back to her husband and Mrs. Wing petulantly.

Good humor on the contrary, was Eugene's suit.

His white teeth flashed as he replied. "Why, yes, you may ask, and I'm glad to answer. The reply, however, depends on what your term *'getting on'* conveys to the mind. It doesn't greatly matter for me, as an individual, to be out of a job. I'm taken care of in that event, until I get another. We're sent from country to country, you'll find us nowadays everywhere, modern missionaries, preaching industrial Christianity. As for your term 'getting on,' my group only consider a man's getting on, when he rises with, not above, his fellow creatures. 'Getting on,' with us, refers to the general condition, not the individual."

Mrs. Eugene flounced in her chair, and as she spoke to Stephen, her earrings swung. Her skin was very white beneath the innocent rouging, and her hair seen beneath the hat, was russet-red.

"My Lord, he's off again. How'd you like to be tied to some'n' like that? Every time any girl I know, here or up in Cincinnati, gets goin' with a feller, I say to her, 'Jus' you make right sure before you subscribe to any more installments of this love story, darling, just what sort of a bug-idea chappie dear expects to keep in the house for a lodger.' I was a kid goin' to high school when 'Gene came to board with us, and it all looked good then to me."

She wore cheap slippers of patent leather, with high heels, and finished with metal buckles. Having poked with a pointed toe at first one and then another dog as they lay dozing on the grass in front of her, she flung herself back again in her chair, and the discontent in her face deepened.

Mrs. Wing, when Eugene paused, on the contrary gave a snort, spirited old war horse, straightened her cap, and prepared to enjoy herself, remarking that it

doesn't imply alignment with the man on the other side of the fence to listen to him. One suspected that it was insurgency in general and in itself, this old sinner loved; the individual and his line of rebellion, having little to do with it.

"How'd you get to this stand of yours, Eugene Lelewel? I'd like to hear. Where'd you come from? How'd you get here? To our little-town metropolis that we in America call a city. I hear that you don't approve of us Americans? Hey? Nor of our form in government that you find over here?"

He laughed softly. It was plain to see that the old creature with her myriad crow's-feet, and her million fine wrinkles, pleased the man mightily. As, indeed, when she set herself so to do, she in her day had pleased and titillated many another of more difficult approach than this young labor agitator.

"For me," Eugene told her amiably, "existing governments wherever found, are bankrupt. I'm thirty-four years old, and long since I gave up hope of getting what my class want, out of any government as now operating. I'm building towards a future which precludes any privileged class from achieving its purpose through government any longer."

Lucy and Andrey, returning across the grass, again joined the group beneath the tree. The boy carried, cupped in his arm, and eclipsing his pink-and-white waist, a huge bunch of flowers, white phlox, blue delphinium, rose and lemon snapdragon, pink and white pyrethrum, mauve and white canterbury bell, upon which he gazed delightedly.

Lucy had not gathered these varieties in blossoms and colors for him, whatever may have been her purpose. Life as it moved here on her grandmother's

place, by no means was so simple as this. Jerry Jackson from some point of vantage, had seen Lucy and the boy making for the flower borders, and reached the spot before they did, producing from the pocket of his overalls as he arrived, a pair of flower-shears. A gardener of spirit, and jealous of his prerogatives, accustomed to long periods of absence on the part of his employer, he allowed no one to break a flower stem without supervision by himself, if he could forestall it.

Eugene arose and met his son. "Come with me and tell Mrs. Wing who, and what you are, Andrey. Give me your flowers, and go and recite your credentials."

Andrey surrendered his bouquet, and walked across the circle to Mrs. Wing. Lifting his head on its overthin small neck, he raised his hand.

"I am a citizen of the world, and a little brother of mankind."

Eugene looked pleased. "Suppose, Andrey, when you and I go over to France on a mission as delegate this autumn, as we expect to do, Jean François has no English? How will you declare yourself to him?"

"Je suis un citoyen du monde entier, et petit frère du genre humain."

"And suppose again, when we run down to Milan from Paris, to the congress that convenes there a fortnight later, Beppino has no English, and no French. What then?"

"Sono cittadino del mondo, epiccolo fratellino del l' umanita."

"And after you and I reach Madrid for the conference there?"

"Soy ciudadano del mundo, y hermanite de la humanidad."

Mrs. Lelewel had been sitting unregarded and over-

looked, as she evidently considered it, for as long as her mounting fury could endure it. She burst forth to Stephen beside her, and then to the group at large.

"Don't it get you? Ain't it just fierce, what's he doing with that child? Do you reckon anything I say about it goes? Or that I'm counted in on that trip he's talkin' about? Guess again. Has he ever let me go on these trips with him? None for me. When he comes home from his work late afternoons, and meets Andrey on the sidewalk with his roller skates with the other children, does he leave him be? He takes him with him to the reading rooms; or to Marx Hall; or to the bowling alleys where he's goin' to find the crowd; and shows him off like he's doing now. D'you want to know where 'Gene's spare time goes? He's working on what he calls a catechism for workingmen's children, questions and answers in all the languages. He looks to getting it printed when he gets over to Geneva."

Eugene made his own smiling addenda to this statement from his angry wife. "Through means such as this catechism, among other ways, Andrey and I look to see the partitions come down, and one people be made of the children throughout the world."

CHAPTER XII

MRS. WING spoke dryly to Eugene. "How am I asked to regard the performance of your boy? As the exhibition of an automaton, or of a thinking creature?"

One grasped that Eugene was eagerly proud of the child. "Ah, but you must know Andrey to judge him! *You* see him quiet and shy. He's the reverse. He's thoughtful, yes; but also he's passionate, knowing his mind, and desiring it. Hearing his mother read from the paper last night that showers for to-day were possible, he snatched the page from her and trampled on it. He wanted to come this afternoon, you see."

Andrey had taken his flowers from his father and carried them to a chair, where he stood beside them, lifting them stalk by stalk, and rearranging them.

MRS. WING *(to Eugene)*.—Explain your purpose in all this? This folderol with the boy for one thing. At eighty-eight I find myself, for all my hopes, my creeds, and my desires, but the outcome of the depths and shallows, the virtues and the defects of my time. Assure me if you can, that you'll be anything more in your turn?"

EUGENE *(he shrugged his shoulders)*.—*You* stand for the old order; merely asking of it, as I understand you do, that it extend its offices to your sex also. Well, I don't. I live for one purpose, that in time

the great producing classes shall be the governing class.

Mrs. Wing nodded to Stephen, then with her cane pointed to a tray on the table. He handed the tray to Eugene, who took a cigarette, held out his fingers for a match, and went on talking.

EUGENE.—And I'm not alone. The movement among workingmen of similar discontent the world over to repudiate existing governments, is widespread, and the consequences when they come, are likely to be extensive. I probably will not see them. As I said, I'm thirty-four years old. Only a cataclysm can bring about in this generation, such changes as my class have in mind. It's possible Andrey won't see these changes. But Andrey's children will. It lies in accustoming the mind to the idea, through the children of the proletariat the world over. This is my answer about this folderol with Andrey.

He struck a match on the match-stand, leaning forward to the table to do so, lit his cigarette, and went on talking.

EUGENE.—You asked me, Mrs. Wing, what's back of this assassination in Servia. I don't know. Frankly I hope it's no ill-directed move from any of my brethren over there. We've a vast educational work to do before we're ready for the match to be laid to the powder. We want constructive revolution in time, but first we need universal proletariat preparation. If any one's responsible for this murder other than the fanatic individual perpetrator, it's more likely at this stage of the game to be capital hiding behind militarism. The working classes of

Europe are so open in their present moods of discontent, capital would welcome a European war to divert the general mind."

The eyes of the group, Eugene included, here were drawn to Andrey. The boy had left his flowers on the chair, and going to Lucy's side where she sat in a rustic chair, was standing at her knee, and gazing at her.

Her consciousness of the nearness of Stephen again was absorbing her; filling her thoughts, and rendering her a bit obtuse to things about her. There is a beauty which is a reflex from the soul. As the glow of a jewel comes from within, the fire of an opal, the luster of a pearl, so the light in her face at the moment was a beauty apart from the harmony of the features, being a radiance of the soul. Andrey drawn irresistibly to gaze at her, pressed against her knee.

Again she put out a hand to him. He touched it this time with his fingers, then with a sudden rapture of adoration, seized it and laid his cheek against it. It was homage; the child's tribute to the compelling things of the soul; as beautiful as it was unpremeditated, and involuntary. If Andrey had looked up, he would have seen a startled sweetness, new to the girl's face, and in her dark eyes, sudden swimming tears.

Perhaps he did see them. For the rest of the afternoon he moved with her, never more than a foot from her side.

Eugene's eyes came back from their survey of Lucy. The impress of her upon his consciousness seemed answerable for the new direction of his thoughts. He laughed outright.

EUGENE.—I'm going to put a situation to you, Mrs.

Wing. I met Miss Wing, your granddaughter, and her companion, Mrs. Janvier, on their way to the polls. I learned that Mrs. Janvier was there to fight the machine that controls the city's policies. God knows, I said to myself, this lady's zeal must be calculated to make her husband, Mr. Stephen Janvier, senior, feel some little like a fool. Except that he has good company; the most of his group having wives in this fight, and each man of them tarred with the same brush.

He looked across at Stephen, who from his chair beside Mrs. Lelewel, was listening.

EUGENE.—Shall I continue?

STEPHEN.—Why not?

EUGENE.—With your permission. Your uncle, Mr. Janvier, corporation lawyer and capitalist, is not a little interested in at least two of the public utilities. He and certain of his associates, are interested in still other public-serving properties which have a good deal to do in dictating who shall be chosen to govern the city. The mayors of your city for a good many years have been the preferred candidates of these same controlling business interests of the city. How then, and this is what I wanted to ask these two ladies that morning three weeks ago, have your schools reached such a downward state? And why were these ladies so indignant? Is it possible that they in their eagerness to take up new duties, do not know who it is they're fighting?

EUGENE *(flinging away his cigarette, and looking straight at Stephen)*.—I may ask you what I couldn't put to Mrs. Stephen Janvier. Which is this: Can

you, and do you, ask me to believe that Mr. Janvier and his group care a rap really for the common welfare? A coterie of men notoriously concerned with their individual enrichment, rather than with the city which they're bleeding. You people here have had a rule by public-utility owners for forty years. What sort of a city, including schools, have they given you?

MRS. WING *(who it was evident was enjoying herself for the moment hugely)*.—Young man, are you about to disclose to me after all this time of wondering, who it was a few years since, ran gas stock down with a bang? By which I lost more dollars than I care to remember?

EUGENE *(flinging back a smile)*.—Do you really care to know, Mrs. Wing, since you asked me this, how I happen to be in America? Some years ago one of your magazines published a series of articles on the shamelessness of your municipal governments. These exposures showed us across the world, a field here in America, amazingly ready for our creed of discontent to take root in, and put forth.

Mrs. Wing seeing that he had finished, relaxed her gaze, and also her body; jerked her cap straight, and leaning back in her chair, gave a whiff of impatience, not to say derision. Then she laughed mightily.

MRS. WING.—It's a fearful place according to your defining, young man, the Great Babylon, America, and its leading citizens. When you know it as I at eighty-eight, think I do, who judge the whole by the average, you'll find much of what you're claiming, simply isn't true. Half-truths never are.

Which also meant that Mrs. Wing, having squeezed the juice of novelty from the present occasion and gotten what she wanted, now was tired; a fickleness in temper that is by no means uncommon with her type. She glanced towards the house. Now that the visit was over so far as she was concerned, it was well to have it over. She was tired of the Lelewels. She'd shoo the whole *posse comitatus* away after she'd had her milk-punch, sending them to see the garden, and on to the orchard to help themselves to June apples and ripe plums; and herself take a nap.

"Here is Miss Kitty McKane, I see," she announced; "bringing Tom, and Ellen Jackson. Mrs. Lelewel, let somebody bring your chair here by me, while we have our—*what is it* we're to have, Lucy?"

Lucy aroused to what was going on. Her grandmother was implying that Mrs. Lelewel was having a dreary time. Angry with herself that she, drifting in a maze and a dream, should lose herself in the face of her duties, she rose, as Miss Kitty and her force of two, arrived with their trays and glasses.

The face of Mrs. Eugene, flushed beneath the paint, was resentful. The afternoon had promised much, and the disappointment was biting deep. Lucy went to her. Whereupon she, poor vain girl, thrust her shoulder about with an excluding gesture, crude and passionate, as an ill-tempered child will do towards the object of its disfavor. Her words incoherent and furious, were directed to Stephen, the only ally she seemed to feel she had made during the afternoon, but reached them all.

"Above such visitors as we are, she is. Quite some apart, she let's us know. Keeps to herself, smiling and

looking on. Oh, I could hate her! Maybe I do! Comes the time, maybe I will!"

Her husband with the others heard. His rejoinder was prompt. "Don't be a fool, Lyda; or if that's too much to ask of you, don't be a bigger one than you have to be."

A small thing all this, it might appear; its start the seeming slight of one woman by another. But women since the beginning of time have paid for such invariably.

* * * * * *

Mrs. Wing, with Mrs. Eugene now installed beside her, sipped her milk-punch. What an ass the man was to have saddled himself with such a creature, brainless and vulgar!

"And what, Mrs. Lelewel, are *your* feelings about these views of your husband? I suppose you think with him?"

The fingers of Mrs. Eugene crushed to fragments the sandwich just taken upon her plate. She burst forth, the smoldering fury of her resentment in general leaping anew to flame.

"I think I'm married to a nut; a muff; a fool; a talking machine! Since you ask me, I'm just tired. I'm come to an end of it for me. Everybody comes saying to me, *'He's smart; your husband's smart!'* Why don't he turn his smartness to account then? What's he got to show for it? *My* father was ten years over from the old country when he owned his own shop; and my mother'd had her own home, too, but for him dying right then. She'd have had her Ford car by now, if he'd lived, her flivver, like half the wives I know. What's a girl to do when like me, she's tied herself to such as I have? All I see for his smartness

is that it makes him *different.* I hate people who're *different.* Why can't he be like the husbands of other women?"

The tall glass stood unregarded on the table by her. She took a proffered cake, and crushed it beside the sandwich already there.

"Look at Andrey, and what 'Gene's doin' to him! Why can't he let Andrey be! But no; he's set on making him *different,* too. And I tell you again, and I've told him, I'm one of those who hate people, and hate things, that're *different!*"

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Henry, the chauffeur, and the car, were at the door to take the Lelewels to the station. Andrey suddenly flung himself upon Lucy, whose side up to this moment he had not left, clinging to her with both thin hands. When his father tried to remove him, he struggled; burst into passionate tears; and when forced to yield to the other's superior force, refused to be pacified.

The meager little body was so shaken by the force of his passionate sobbing, that Lucy went to him; putting her arm about him where he stood, and with her handkerchief, wiping the poor, excited little face, hot and tear-stained.

His father interpreted his words, broken as these were between his sobs and his hiccoughs.

"He says that he'll never see you again, Miss Wing."

Ellen Jackson was carrying the child's flowers, and Stephen had in his hand a basket of the apples and plums that Miss Kitty had provided for him.

His mother, her earrings swinging, jerked the boy from within Lucy's encircling arm, and pushed him ahead of her toward the car.

"What do you reckon'll be the difference to any of 'em *here,* if you never do see 'em again?"

* * * * * *

Andrey was wrong. He saw Lucy several times in near succession. At her grandmother's suggestion she went by the home of the Lelewels in the car two days later, and left a basket of Jerry's vegetables. Again she took them fruit. And still again she went by with eggs, and cream, and butter. On a subsequent Sunday afternoon, the boy came out again to Ashe, this time with his father only. One gathered that these successive points of contact bit deep into the brooding child's sensitive mind.

* * * * * *

These events, however, belong to the days following. As Lucy turned away from the departing car which bore the Lelewels, Andrey all too quickly was forgotten. Stephen was there, and their eyes met.

She, conscious of happiness as one is conscious of the warmth from the sun in early springtime, had a sudden knowledge that should her soul, too freighted as it was by nature with reserve, ever lift itself into the high heavens of sheer joy, this Stephen here beside her, would be its wings. In the warmth of his courage, and beneath the caress of his presence, she began to see that she would dare anything.

* * * * * *

Mrs. Wing and Miss Kitty, from their chairs beneath the catalpa, watched Lucy and Stephen returning across the grass to them. A faint rose lingered in the west behind the house, and repeated itself in the sky overhead. Elsewhere gathered the purple-indigo of coming dusk. The air as though languid after the heat

of the day, was motionless; the birds were silent; not a leaf stirred.

How is it with a woman who herself once was imperious and compelling, as she looks on young lovers? Does her heart recall how it was when it, too, was young and eager, was passionate with emotions?

Mrs. Wing had had her nap; her milk punch with its generous quota of fine old Bourbon had preceded the nap; she was refreshed and invigorated. Yet at this moment as the two young people came toward her, her hand went out to Kitty in a gesture of piteous entreaty.

There were encroaching crow's-feet about Miss Kitty's own eyes; the paint and the white on her face were almost as with the clown in the circus; but taking her as she was, she was one of the few persons in this world who successfully held, and had held, her own with Mrs. Wing. Having faced her first when she was a girl of fourteen, she had continued to speak the truth as she saw it. She had had hard school teachers early. Orphanhood, dependence, and the early necessity for self-control, are stern mentors. Through their discipline she long had learned strength. And Mrs. Wing clung to her because of it.

"Kitty, stay here at Ashe with me the while longer; watch over me; be good to me; keep me alive that I may see the final coming together of these two; until I witness this dearest wish of my heart consummated!"

They heard Lucy laugh; a radiant laugh, spontaneous and felicitous; she who too rarely laughed. Mrs. Wing was triumphant.

"Ah, Kitty, Kitty, listen to that! Listen to it! The thing most needed in life by my child, she will find through this Stephen that I discovered for her: *the*

courage to take happiness where happiness is! Commend me, Kitty, commend me, if but for this once, for a wise woman!"

* * * * * *

Mrs. Wing pushed aside the footstool from beneath her feet. "Pick up my cane, Stephen, and lend me your arm. I'll make a start on the journey back to the house."

She arose with his aid, Miss Kitty and Lucy gathering up from her chair, the one her scarf, the other her pillow, and the start was made. It was plain to see that she doted on this young man. A woman of her especial world that arrogates to itself what it wants, she could be as selfish and crafty as any other creature in it. But for this young man she had more than any penchant; any fancy; for him she had a deep and a growing ardor. There were not many sweet resting places left in the barrenness of her long disillusioned fancy. This affection she now felt for this grandson and namesake of her early lover; this scion of him who still was the passion, and the only one of her life, was one of these sweet places.

"Stephen, your ripple-nosed man, your Eugene Lelewel, is interesting, though not in any particular original. I've met his kind, the student agitator, the university-made radical, for years myself on the other side."

Stephen showed interest. "I've been curious to hear what you make of him. Except that he's not so young, nor so naïve, and possibly is potent where we were innocuous, he makes me think of Warrington Adams and myself when we—bold and bitter undergraduates—were in the running with the radical student group at Harvard."

"H'm, but as you've just said, he *is* potent. Your man is clever, but whether more than clever, I doubt. What matters rather is, that he's a disturbing sign of the times, an indication of the stream of tendency. Suppose that a world federation of undergraduates such as you just spoke of, were to find themselves with power through organization and numbers, to impose their will? A federation numbering millions, yet still in the throes and vagaries of a mental and moral adolescence, out of which manhood's sound opinion is to be born? That is a fair estimate of where the proletariat world at large finds itself to-day."

Confident and dominant still was this small body, this shriveled frame, its hand clutching Stephen's arm. "Let the present world look to it, Stephen; your world. Any system that in these times would survive, must guarantee a decent and hopeful existence to all partakers in its workings. I saw one system go down; an economic system based on slavery. Any system will live only so long as it meets the required end. Failing to do this, it inevitably perishes. Fifty-odd years ago I saw the system which was about me, was become foul and cancerous; and took my stand with the forces that would slough the rotten flesh off the infected body of the whole. Your grandfather, when he was a young man, had a favorite argument. I never admitted at the time that it was sound. Now I'm not so sure. At the end of the eighteenth century, the revolution of the peasants occurred not in Russia, or Prussia, or Austria, or Italy, but in France. And why? Because as he held, compared with the European common people elsewhere, still entirely crushed beneath the burden of servitude, the French peasant was better off, and as a consequence the more intelligent, and the more ready

to resent the political and social privileges of the nobility. Take it for its worth. I never claimed it was sound."

* * * * * *

That night Stephen, having started for home, reached the woodland beyond the osage hedge. Stopping his motor, he left his car, and went back to look again at the house which sheltered Lucy; that first and last had cradled her.

The lights below stairs were out. He took his way to a bench to the right of the house, beneath the purple beech, which loomed large, a black mass in the starlit darkness.

He knew which was his darling's room. A light shone there. A shadow went to and fro on the curtain. His heart beat tumultuously.

He and Lucy had spent the evening at the piano whereat she fortunately somewhat surpassed him as a performer; trying some music sent her by Warrington Adams, that arch defender of the modern composer. Later they went out to the porch, where the warm dusk was punctuated by the stars, and the summer stillness by the hootings of a great owl.

If the girl was lovelier this evening in Stephen's eyes than ever before; if she was more responsive, he assumed for himself no advantage in these things, nor dared take any.

Say he lost her? Say he failed to make her love him? Though not for one moment would he consider this!

But allowing that he failed. Still would he have her, and still would he love her! A passion for a woman such as his for Lucy, becomes part of a man, and cannot afterward be separated from him. Our great mo-

ments in life become part of us; so that we are what they with the rest of it, have made us. In this sense Lucy was his forever.

The light in her room went out. The moon rose, orange-yellow, above the woodland where he had left his car, picking out the brick of the house, lighting the lawn and driveway, the shrubberies and the trees. In the far borders against these shrubberies, Stephen could differentiate certain of the flowers, the hollyhocks standing tall, and their blossoms in the light, gleaming white.

Man, not woman, is the true, the incurable romantic. Stephen, here on the bench beneath the beech tree, saw himself one in the myriad line of man-lovers of woman, in recession to Adam in his Eden. And he thanked God that it was his to share with these in the common lot.

CHAPTER XIII

STEPHEN pressed his advantage in that from day to day, he gave Lucy so little time to think. He kept the roads to Ashe well-traveled, wasting no time, and neglecting no chance. To him it was a glad, mad time, and to him it was sweet. The shining days so far as it lay with him, were filled.

"You're a mad lover, Stephen Janvier," said Mrs. Wing on one occasion; "and, as usual, you're ahead of time. You give my child no breathing spaces."

"I'm what every man in love would like to be, I say it humbly, ma'am, only the most of us are afraid."

Mrs. Wing was sitting on the porch. He dropped into a chair.

"My utterances are meant to sound authoritative and final, but do not be deceived, ma'am. I'm no surer at bottom than any other man who loves a woman. I am in fact most of the time frightened to death. She uses me cruelly, Mrs. Wing."

"I've noticed it," dryly.

A figure bending over the handlebars of a bicycle came paddling around the drive. It was Lonnie Simpson, Lonnie being short for Alonzo, the son of the neighborhood butcher. He was bringing the afternoon newspapers for which his father was the local agent. Willie, a younger brother of Lonnie, as a rule delivered them.

Lonnie was a local product, fruit of the county grade

school, an amiable youth with a milky way of warm-hued freckles, and a friendly and ingenuous soul. Like Bennie Harlan, the son of the minister, he was Lucy's age, and again like Bennie, appeared greatly younger. The three, up to the time Lucy was ten, attended the grade school together.

Dismounting, he let his wheel down, resting it against the steps of the porch; then took from the cotton bag slung from his shoulders the two papers due this household.

Mrs. Wing approved of neighborhood spirit, and identified herself with the village and its interests.

"What're *you* doing on duty this afternoon, Lonnie?" she inquired. "Where's Willie?"

Lonnie looked upon Mrs. Wing as individually his friend, as did most of the tradespeople in the village, though he did not grasp this fact. He, under stress, had a fatal propensity for stammering, but he never knew himself to stammer with Mrs. Wing.

"Bud's gone to town for the ball game. Gee, but that kid's a worse fan even than me!"

He handed up the papers with a muscular freckled hand that had twirled many a ball on the local team. Stephen handed them to Mrs. Wing.

"Great news this afternoon, Mrs. Wing," volunteered Lonnie, lifting his wheel, and pausing before he mounted to paddle off. "Chicago's the favorite in the opening game of the series, ma'am. Boston's backers are placing their hope in the Red Sox's pitcher."

"Thank you kindly for the information, Lonnie. This being the cream of the news, I suppose there's no especial other?"

Lonnie, gratified with the reception given his sport-

ing-page scare heads, was willing to allow a place in relative values to other items. "There's more trouble in that there Balkans, and when the mid-afternoon edition went to press, the Giants were losing to the Pirates, the game standing 6 to 0." He paddled off.

Mrs. Wing was highly diverted. She chuckled. "What's Hecuba to Lonnie, or he to Hecuba? Last summer he took his first trip into the world, going to Cincinnati on the Fourth of July for the day, to see the ball game there. Who was it said the songs of Homer were the sporting page of the Greeks? Just what now do you suppose he conceives the Balkans to be? Another ball team?"

Her voice changed. "Naturally there's more trouble there. Stephen, if you're seeing your Eugene Lelewel again, ask him for me, what Servia's retort to this Austrian insolence is going to be?"

She held out a hand for the papers, which had slipped from her lap to the floor, felt for the glasses in her lap, but did not put them on.

"Stephen, I'm troubled. We're a peace-loving people, we of the United States. And yet in my lifetime I've seen this country of ours engaged in three wars, not to mention her numerous Indian wars. How many conflicts I've seen Europe engage in, it's hard to say on the moment; and how many treaties made, resultant of these wars, that have held only until the next conflict."

She sighed sharply. "War's a dirty job, Stephen. Dropping all cant, it's a game for advantage based on the animal instinct of getting at another creature's throat; on the brute lust for killing. Under the European system of universal armament and militaristic education, only the American who knows Europe as I

do quite realizes how easy it is for governments over there to create a war. To start people fighting who obey because they're cattle, and trained to the habit of obedience when told to fight, for untold generations."

Her hand moved along the smooth arm of her chair. "Your Eugene creature, and I, are similar uneasy spirits; though from different points of approach. Like him I deplore a European upheaval just now. Like him and *his* forces, so I and *mine,* are not ready. Education of one-half the world, I mean of my own sex, takes time. But give us present workers among women ten years more, Stephen; I prophesy it, who will not be here to see it, for the feminist movement is far greater than the single issue of suffrage; give us another decade for the educating of women, and, believe what I tell you, *there never will be another war!*"

He smiled. Whether he agreed with Mrs. Wing or not, she was a great old girl, and he adored her!

She saw the smile. Stephen as an individual she was amazingly fond of; as a male creature she did not doubt he was as hide-bound and obtuse as she considered the majority of the sex. She had more to say, and said it.

"War is woman's natural enemy. She does right to hate it. The future lies in educating her to know and to see this. Stephen, this is more than any average issue with me. You may know what I'm going to say to you. According to the ideas in this section of the country as to what constitutes a fortune, I'm a rich woman. I've taken care of what I myself had, and the city property that came to me as a wife's share in my husband's estate happened to lie in what has become the heart of the retail district, and has trebled in its

values. I can count on a clear yearly income of sixty thousand dollars. I live on a third of this; I retrench; I deny Lucy; for eight months of the year wherever I am, I keep one and often two secretaries busy. With what? Aiding me in the distribution of my support, moral and material, in the spread of the doctrine of feminism among women. For us and our cause right now, a European war would be calamitous. We haven't progressed far enough. Women as an organized world force are as children starting to walk, hardly able as yet to stand alone!"

She looked at Stephen sagely, somberly. "*I* know war! *I* know its devilish machinery for arousing the imagination by the shallowest of pretexts; its sounding cymbals called 'self-defense,' 'national honor,' and the like. I know the average caliber of the populace, and the lack of courage to face the opprobrium and suspicion that pursues the noncombatant citizen. I know the contagion of the bellicose spirit when once it's aroused. And myself have fallen a victim to the semi-hysterical state that once a country is in a state of war, seizes the nation, the people, and drives them before it as sheep on our western plains are driven before the sweep of a blizzard."

She leaned forward, and regarded Stephen if anything, more somberly.

"I who hate war, and who, because of its stronger hold on him, broke with your grandfather, the man I loved, have myself succumbed to the contagion and the passion of it. The chief offending of my life, its major crime, and cardinal wrong, is that I, in 1862, induced two men, themselves under no moral obligation, to go into the Civil War. Calculating to a nicety what I thought each man's price, I proffered it. To

the one, a negro, I agreed to buy and free his wife and children. President Lincoln within eighteen months freed the race; and the man presumably was killed at Manassas. What I did was to rob the woman of her husband, and the children of a father."

There was a twist about her old lips, and in her voice the anguish of strong feeling.

"The other man whom I persuaded to enter the Union army, was an Irish emigrant who had yet to receive his papers making him an American citizen. I offered to pay his debts. He was staggering under an accumulation of these, incurred during the long illness and the succeeding death of his wife. As with Hannibal Jackson, the negro man, so it was with Michael McKane. He was killed at Chancellorsville, and his two motherless girls were left orphans. No, we women are not ready to be faced with another war, we haven't found ourselves sufficiently, and as of old, the contagion of war with its corrosives and its poisons, will seize us. Here comes Bennie Harlan with his racket, across the grass. And here come Lucy and 'Genie Harrison out the door. Get on with you to your tennis. 'Genie's out with Lucy for the night, and you and Bennie are expected to stay for dinner."

CHAPTER XIV

THE July days slipped by. For the first time in the memory of man, old Mrs. Lucy Wing was facing a summer in Kentucky, and facing it without grumbling.

Conceding that she was what she claimed, at heart a democrat, with little tolerance for the assumptions of rank and privilege, the family of Wings into which she had married, and whose name her granddaughter bore, had no claims based on performance, to being with the people.

The first Wing in America came over in 1618, one of the Society of Berkeley Hundred, a company composed chiefly of Gloucestershire men, Sir William Throckmorton one of these; and to whom young Wing, who was his nephew, was secretary.

Arrived in the new colony of Virginia, he promptly fell out with his mates with whom he was associated, seeking and obtaining from "ye Council & General Courte," permission to "remove from where he now liveth and plant uppon the ground at Mulberry Island." The Court giving "leave and permission for him soe to doe."

He next fell out with "ye Council & General Courte," and upon yet another issue. It being known to his descendants unto the present day that "if Mr. John Wing, gent, *'would'* absente himselfe from churche for Three Monthes, & uppon the Saboth days go a-huntinge

of hoggs on Mulberry Island, he must paye into the Publique Treasurie, 100 pound-weighte of Tobacco as provided by act of ye General Assembly."

Sixty years later, 1688-90, the years of "ye amazing revolution," the grandson of this gentleman-transgressor of the Virginia Sabbath, John Wing also, and still of Mulberry Island, speaks caustically in a letter of the flight from England of the Stuart, "ye laste Gentleman-kinge"; and of the seating on the English throne of "ye Dutchman of Orange."

This John Wing it was, whose domestic infelicities were notorious, and who dying before his spouse, left to the lady, "ye sum of £3.6*s*.8*d*. for a mourninge gowne; and for a pair of ditto gloves, value 6*s*."

The grandson of this John Wing, by name John Henry Wing, in 1770, quarreled with his twin brother, William Robertson Wing, over the favor of one "Ann, off-springe of Benjamin Poague of South Forke & Lettice, his wife." Not waiting for the ceremony which gave Ann to William's keeping, he went west over the Wilderness Road into Kentucky, and made himself a name as an Indian fighter.

There was and still is extant a saying, "A Wing will have his way, come devil or doomsday."

John Henry Wing, grim warrior, was well in his forties, when in 1796, he traveled back to Virginia. Returning, he brought with him as his wife, a stout, high-colored lady with dark hair and black eyes, accompanied by her slaves, and bringing with her her household goods. To wit, Mistress Ann Wing, the widow of his brother William.

The lady left behind her in Virginia a stately habitation, for which she had systematically fought from the day she married William Wing; the building of

which grand mansion so greatly impoverished this person that he found himself considerably embarrassed ever after; and, to quote from his surviving written words on the subject, "in a place which pute mee well out of danger of spending soe much ever againe."

John Henry brought Mistress Ann to a four-roomed house of logs. A plain enough affair, standing on a slight knoll approached through a woodland, "nott soe far from the settlement of Middletown alreddy nearer to being a metropolis than is its sister settlement of Louisville, twelve miles away at the Falls of the Ohio." The site in fact occupied by the brick house that replaced it, and which survived it to this day.

Surviving annals have it, that the fiercest of the differences between these two, Mistress Ann, and the doughty John Henry, arose over the question of the lady's negroes, these being house servants whom she had brought with her. She insisted they be furnished with liveries, buff and blue by preference, and he protested in favor of "honeste plaine garbe"; neither gave in, and Madame's house retinue oftenest went ragged; seemly coats and breeches of whatever nature, being provided for them by neither mistress nor master.

The son and only child of these two, by name John Henry, built the present house in 1834. A needy potentate he, a spendthrift and reveler, he lived plentifully nevertheless; having negroes in abundance; keeping open house; proud, idle; fond of poker, cockfighting, good whisky, and horse racing; as became a gentleman of his standing and fine lineage.

He had two sons and several daughters. The second son was the eminent divine, Robertson Wing, the one departure of this nature known to the blood. The

eldest son, by name John Henry, was the husband of Lucy Routt.

The next two John Henry Wings died young, the one the son of Lucy Routt, and the other her grandson; the son in the Civil War, the grandson during the Spanish War, each before he was thirty.

The young Lucy, the last of her line, suffered from too *little* romance in her nature, due perhaps to the excesses of some of these forbears; her mother, who died when she was four, herself coming from a line of slave-holding, high-living ancestry. Content that her grandmother should hold the center of the stage, herself an onlooker, she so far submitted to life rather than enjoyed it.

She had her standpoints, conscious and unconscious. That some human beings are the privileged superiors to most of those about them, she accepted as a fact; and was entirely of a mind that he who imposes his will on another that he is the better creature, is this thing!

When Julius Buck, the son of the since dead 'Celie, the present ragtime genius at the kettle drum, was a little fellow he came up daily to the big house from his mother's cabin on the rear of the place to play with Lucy, the two being of an age.

On an autumn day, the white child, and the colored child, were standing beside an open kettle; a huge round-bellied affair, swung over an outdoor fire of wood embers in the barn lot.

The business in hand was manipulated by Jerry Jackson, who was boiling out sorghum molasses for himself, and for such other servants on the place as might want to enjoy it with him. The Indian summer

air was redolent with the acrid and pungent sweetness of the boiling syrup.

The small Lucy, standing by, in a blue reefer coat and a scarlet tam o'shanter, sniffed. She was an imperious-tempered little creature.

"I smells 'em too," affirmed little yellow Julius, of a mind that molasses as an appeal to certain of the senses, is plural.

Lucy looked him over with her large black eyes. "You *don't.*"

He held his ground. "I does, I smells 'em; en ef I smacks my lips, I tastes 'em, too."

She slapped him.

To-day, had she gone deep enough into her consciousness she would have found resentment still there, that the natural attributes which Julius claimed in common with others for himself, were enjoyed by the human race at large; her fellow creatures of whatsoever color, class and attainments, even as she, having "hands, organs, dimensions, senses, affections, passions."

Her grandmother defined her to one of her friends:

"She's a Wing; no other blood is discernible in her, so is she dominated by the one. And should life deal with her too recklessly, incipient in her is the coldness and the cynicism of a worldling."

* * * * * *

Love, after all, was not coming easily to Lucy. Not so readily could she escape the prison of her own temperament. Love can be a most delicately balanced, an altogether and exquisitely sensitive thing, suffering its revulsions, and also experiencing its ecstasies.

It was well into July. She had known Stephen some-

thing over six weeks. In view of the enormity of what he asked of her, six weeks is a modicum of time. So far as a knowledge of her own heart went, the first thirty-six hours had been sufficient.

Two days ago she was happy in her absorption. Since then she had come to loathe love. Since then she had seen about her, a world sick for passion; a world of creatures seeking mates, as Stephen and she.

Yesterday she came out the door of the little local post office, and all but collided with Julius Buck and William Coffin, co-members of the ragtime band of two.

They were tight-locked on the pavement before the doorway, swaying, staggering, reeling, William, the brown boy, Julius, the nimbler, yellow boy. The advantage was with neither the one nor the other, when Julius, pinning the brown boy's arms to his body with his one hold, upheaved him with a thrust of his own body, and lifting him, went down uppermost with him upon the flagging.

There was no word, only the panting, sobbing breathings of the two, their silent concentration, deadly in its ferocity, broken by the thud of knuckles pounding on flesh, the blood up-spattering from the brown boy's smashed features, showering the stones.

A dozen men, the most of these white, emerging from the butcher shop, the post office, and the railway station, reached the two; and the thing was over.

Lucy, making her way from the post-office steps, caught a sentence from a colored woman onlooker:

"It's about Ben Dick's little yellow Sally. She's Julius' girl, an' she went las' night with William to the Baptis' barbecue."

Ben Dick was the colored carpenter of the locality.

Sally, his daughter, who was home for the summer from the state's colored normal school, was small and comely.

Lucy was sick and full of loathing. She told herself it was the brute showing in Julius; the beast creeping through his heritage from the jungle.

* * * * * *

On the evening of this same day, Lucy was present at a young people's dance. She saw McHenry Stuart on the porch catch Betty Craig by the shoulder as she broke from him, whirl her about, kiss her brutally, and thrust her away.

Lucy turned abruptly to reënter the house, and ran into Emily Gwynne, who was still madly in the power of her passion for McHenry. She, like Lucy, had witnessed the happening. It seemed to Lucy at the moment that, while she loathed McHenry, she the more loathed Emily.

Bennie Harlan was late arriving. 'Genie was greeting him as Lucy came into the hall, and also was powdering her nose.

"Why didn't you come yourself to the telephone when I called you at your house an hour ago? Were you in your bath and buff, and couldn't? That's where I was when you called me before you left town."

Bennie's face went horribly red. It was a mixed joy for him, this being in the society of the *best*. Life was no bromide for him in these inner circles where he was now moving, but rather was one continual sulphide with pep and explosion.

"I *say!*"

'Genie laughed. "Why cry out before I'm through? I'm not going to say anything *too* liable to shame you

till your epidermis thickens a bit, like ours. We in my world *do* bathe, as I supposed you in yours do too, and not in our Annette Kellerman's either."

She packed away her powder puff with deftness within the vanity case. "Bettie Craig's going to announce her engagement here to-night to Rowan Hart. I'm giving you an item for your paper, you understand."

She closed the small gold case with a snap. Then she snapped an eye at Bennie. "That is she expected at noon to announce it. She may have reconsidered. McHenry's been rushing her too. She told *him* he must square with Emily first. It requires these days that one be practical, and sample all articles offering, before irretrievably accepting or rejecting any."

'Genie assumed no mock modesty. She was no hypocrite. Having none, she pretended to none. She said what she felt, and thought no more about it.

She was honest. She injected a tonic quality into all and any atmosphere she came into. Alike full of gusty joy, impish daring, and jaunty resilience, her laughing red mouth suggested primitive glee, and her brightly glancing eyes a kinship with the unmoral animal world. She met the most extreme strictures brought against her.

"It's what we are," was her defense.

* * * * * *

To-day Lucy loathed love. She hated man for being man. She hated woman as woman.

Stephen came by this afternoon following the dance, for her to go with him to the country club to play tennis with Charlie and Evelyn. Lifting her eyes as she joined him, ready to start, she colored violently.

It was not a blush, and her color continued high.

She followed him dully and unwillingly to the car. She was keeping her appointment with him against her will. Her mind was thick with the lees of disenchantment. She hated herself anew for being a woman; she hated her woman's heart that even at this moment of disillusionment, hideously weakened under the force of Stephen's presence. She shrank from him; shrank the more that she was aware, and with desperation, that the verge was near, a crisis upon her.

* * * * * *

The brisk sets of tennis were over. Charlie and Evelyn had said good-by, and were off in their car for home. Lucy and Stephen saw them start, and went towards their own car. They paused in the open when they reached it, waiting for Bennie Harlan's game to be over, who was going back with them to Ashe.

They were two alone on the top of the world, as they stood here waiting. About them were the rolling links, the long descents of the driveway winding to the levels below, the neighboring roof-crowned hills, mates to their own, the river broad and resistless, the opposite Indiana shores, and in the distance on the Kentucky side, the city.

Stephen lifted his eyes and looked at Lucy. The thing that she dreaded was here. The racket she carried trailed in the dust. She felt her body shiver.

She had on a belted sweater over her white skirt and blouse, and wore a rough wool hat. Her color was brilliant. Looking away from her companion, she fixed her gaze on the west where a vast show of uppiling clouds were firing with the setting sun.

His opening words were casual, but they did not deceive her.

"You play a bully game of tennis, Lucy. You ask no odds on account of your sex."

"Evelyn asks no odds."

Her eyes followed the course of the river as it made its way, wide and majestic, far beneath them on their hill, toward the west. A mighty volume, it now was a thousand shades of gleaming crimson from shore to far shore. A hundred and more years ago settlers came west from Pittsburg on its broad bosom, after the pioneer simplicity of travel in those days; the women and children housed in the small cabin upon the flatboat. Charles Janvier, the French *émigré,* and Julie, his wife, had come to Kentucky in this fashion. Lucy heard her grandmother say so to-day.

"Lucy?"

She braced herself.

"Say that you begin to be in love with love? That you begin to tolerate the idea of me as lover?"

The repressed and passionate sufferings of the past twenty-four hours rushed to her lips. She spoke with the intensity of desperation. She after all was only twenty.

"I'd rather die than tolerate the thought of either!"

"Lucy? You tell me this? What has happened that you say so?"

He was smiling, regarding her as he had so often of late, with eyes of tender fondness, and as she saw, not taking her words too seriously. If he had touched her, so overwhelming was her passion of revulsion, she felt sure that she would die.

"I haven't any reason; it's my mood. I loathe what you speak of as love."

All her agony went into the asseveration.

He looked at her a long moment. "Let me take a

memorandum of my wits and senses," he said, slowly; "for I seem to have lost 'em. Is the fault mine? Will you tell me what it is I've done?"

Tears of misery arose in her eyes. The lines of her brows were indrawn.

"I won't pretend you've done anything. I hate all you're urging upon me, and only beg to go free."

Men likely never will understand woman's innate chastity; as women never will entirely grasp man's fundamental honesty.

Stephen saw that the mood of disaffection upon the girl was real; for the time being was prevailing. He was curiously shaken. All of him that was not longing, was tenderness.

She looked, not at the river below them now, but ahead into the west. The sun behind the high-piled clouds had stained these and the sky overhead, a thousand colors, crimson, orange, gold, violet, rose. These gleamed back from the river, lighted the treetops, and flashed from the windows of the farmhouses on the farther shore.

He would not over-press her. Love such as hers, when she gave it, would be worth the patient waiting. Love with her, when it came to rest, would be abiding.

"My dear, my *dear!*" The words were uttered softly. Then he spoke briskly:

"And now we'll find Bennie, and get on home."

CHAPTER XV

IT was near the end of July, the twenty-eighth in fact. Stephen had dined at his uncle's, a self-invited guest; and now was outstretched upon a leather couch, cigarette in hand, in what, as said before, was known with the household as the library. The business of the farm was conducted here by the man of the house, and here the male members of the household as by instinct drifted.

It was a man's room, furnished with a solid and handsome oblong central table, the same cheerfully littered, a ponderous and comely old secretary-desk, a leather couch and slip-cushion leather chairs. Occupying the wall space above the mantel, was a colored print in an old gilt frame.

The print portrayed the three-quarter figure of an *exquis,* a fop, a *petit-maître,* of the late eighteenth century period in France. His coat, double-breasted, with huge buttons, huge lapels, and a high-standing collar, as also the vest of richer fabric which showed below the high-cut waistline of the coat, opened upon ruffles at the throat. Ruffles appeared again at the wrists.

The full small chin was supported with a monstrous stock. One hand, shapely and beautiful, held by its knob a tasseled cane, the arm outstretched its full and jaunty length. Below the line of the vest was a glimpse of tight-fitting breeches. The low-crowned beaver hat, and the curling locks flowing to the shoulders, framed

a face that was comely as a maiden's. The eyes were long and wide apart, the nose had a hint of an arch, and the lips were full and smiling.

The eyes of Stephen, from his couch, were on the picture, as they had been a thousand thousand times in his lifetime. It was the likeness of his great-great-great-uncle Etienne Janvier.

"Some chap," he told himself as he had told himself before; "the fop complete. That's what bothered and got me when I was a kid, knowing how when his time came, he married Madame Guillotine like a gallant. It's a great thing evidently, to have ideas you're willing to die for!"

He turned his head on the cushion of the couch, and called to a figure passing along the hall.

"I'm in here waiting for you, Aunt Annie. Yearning to talk. Come along in, do, and sit by me while I smoke."

She came in. She had a gauzy scarf about her, its hue a bright orange. It lent a glow to her brunette coloring, which her square-cut black dress dulled, and she looked well.

"*Je t'adore, Tante Annie.* Sit here by me. Thanks awfully."

He settled himself. "Please ma'am, I want to talk. That's why I had dinner with you."

"I guessed as much. Get on with it."

"I've had eight weeks of more than any mere modicum of happiness. I'm referring to my quest of Lucy. Aren't you glad for me, sweetie? Eight weeks of happiness in a lifetime doesn't always come to a man, you know."

"Delighted to be made aware of it."

"You're to be more, you're to be party to it. I need

your coöperation. I want your help. You as yet don't know it, but Mrs. Wing, with a gap of sixty-odd years between her two appearances beneath this roof, is going to be the occasion, and the central figure, of one of your niftiest dinners."

"Is this an assertion, or a request?"

"Oh, I know what's in your mind. Lean over and put your cheek on mine, and I'll tell you more. You're going to jolly Uncle Stephen into thinking that he, and he alone, suggested it; and you're going to see that Charlie and Evelyn catching the idea, back you up in so convincing him."

"What about Evelyn, if you please?" This person came into the room.

Stephen came to a sitting posture, and answered:

"Staged! Title of Production, The Triumph of The Years; or The Ultimate Routt. Impresario, Uncle Stephen. Stage Properties, Aunt Annie. Leading character, Mrs. Lucy Routt Wing. Date, to be determined on."

Evelyn took a seat upon the corner of the cheerfully littered table. Her foot and leg swung.

"Your dramatics carry me away, Stevie. Count me with you whatever it's all about. Charlie's come. He's had his dinner, Maman; he was delayed, and says he ate in town. A last edition of the paper he brought with him has it that big bully Austria-Hungary has declared war on little stepbrother Servia."

Stephen got to his feet with this, and put the end of his cigarette into a tray. "I'd telephone your news to Mrs. Wing, Evie, but that the old girl wouldn't sleep to-night. She told me the other day, in view of the conditions in Europe, if it would hasten the day and give woman an equal voice in any coming troubles,

she'd deed everything she has to the feminist cause, and leave Lucy to charity."

Evelyn lifted her voice. Her husband was passing along the hall. "Charlie! Bring yourself in here. Let's make these two good for a rubber at bridge? A cent a point?"

* * * * * *

On the evening of the third of August, Mrs. Wing arrived in her car at the Stephen Janviers', come with her granddaughter, to dine.

The open door of the house, and its every window, streamed with the light of welcome. Helen Janvier, Stephen, and Colonel Tecumseh Craig, already arrived, were on the porch with the four members of the household.

As the car came to a pause before the stone-flagged walk, Mr. Janvier, Charlie and Stephen, went down the porch steps. Anne, who had walked to the top of the steps with them, caught Stephen's arm as he passed her, and pressed it.

Mrs. Wing, from within the car, addressed the trio. "Help Lucy out, one of you. Let's get her out of the way before I attempt to come."

Stephen opened the door, and Charlie helped Lucy out. He said ever afterward that the girl, whom he could see in the light streaming upon her from the house, patrician, perfectly gowned, her color beyond defining brilliant, had arrived this evening at the completeness of her beauty. In this Mr. Janvier sustained his son.

She started ahead with Charlie, who, with a curious sense of deportment born of the occasion, offered her his arm. But having started she paused, and with deliberation turned back to Stephen. There is a pride that will

not let itself be outmatched. After sixty years Mrs. Lucy Routt Wing was made welcome by these Janviers at their home. The girl pausing, spoke with her eyes to Stephen in the face of his kinsmen, with a sweetness and a poignancy indescribable.

He told her later that he caught his breath. That his senses reeled. That his eyes clung to her as she turned away, and with Charlie went on to the steps and up to the porch.

* * * * * *

He turned back to the car and with his uncle assisted Mrs. Wing, it being no small feat for her to descend, game old girl. Arrived on the flagging, she paused, her cane in one hand, the other on the arm of Mr. Janvier, and got her breath.

"The car is to wait. It's been an atrociously hot day. For no one on God's earth but you Janviers, would I have undertaken this."

She handed the cane to Stephen, took her hand from Mr. Janvier's arm, and began to fumble amid the folds of the lace scarf that was wrapped about her; in time dragging forth a gold lorgnon on a chain. a bauble set with jewels.

One saw at this that Mrs. Wing this evening was very fine indeed; wearing a gown of purple satin, and much fine lace, with a square of lace upon her head, and the glitter of rings upon her hands.

She peered ahead of her, the glasses upheld, her gaze lifting and traveling upward. Behind her, on the line of the horizon, an August moon was rising, orange-red and gigantic.

"Blind as an owl at midday. Stephen senior, be my eyes. Tell me, for instance, with all the innovations and the additions I hear you've made to the house, is

the belvedere as it used to be on the roof?"

"Just as it was, but for an occasional coat of paint, Mrs. Wing."

The glasses fell on their chain, and her hand went back to its place on the arm of her host. She put out her other hand to Stephen for the cane. She spoke contentedly, remaining where she was, and showing no disposition to proceed.

"That belvedere, you must know, intrigued the young people of my day, who came here to the house. We flocked to it on the roof whenever we were allowed. It was a chosen place of summer evenings, and many a couple slipped away to it unobserved."

Her cane hunted a place on the flagging for its ferrule tip.

"It delighted our imaginations that Louis Philippe, the exile, brief sojourner as he was in the life of our community, planned this so charming adjunct to the house then building, of his fellow-country-people, Charles and Julie Janvier. As also it titillated what was romantic in our natures, to follow on the original drawing made for the house, and framed and hanging under glass in the library, the exiled Bourbon's pencilled tracings for this adjunct."

She turned with surprising sudden vigor on the younger man. She spoke too with harsh vigor:

"Love is as good as anything you'll get in life. I say so because I know. Sixty-eight years ago, with the alarms of war all about us calling on youth to go, on that railed platform where we young people loved to be, I quarreled with the man I cared for. Life betrayed me. I was cheated, defrauded, was done! Let's get on now to the others."

She went up the steps to the porch on the older

man's arm. Arrived there, she was lively and agreeable.

"Well, Mrs. Janvier? Helen, also? And Charlie's wife, whom I haven't seen since she was a schoolgirl? Tecumseh Craig, next thing to my own day and generation, why haven't you been to Ashe this month past, to see me, and to dine?"

* * * * * *

Something more than an hour later, Lucy, led by Stephen, her hand in his that he the better might guide her up the final short flight of stairs, stepped out on the balustraded platform.

She looked about her, lifted her face to the heavens with the climbing moon, and the faintly visible stars, then went and peered over the rail. The world below her, a misty sea of treetops, was dusky and murmurous.

She turned about, the railing now behind her, and faced Stephen. The moon touched the whiteness of her throat and shoulders and her bare arms; pointing too, the sheen of her dress, and her satin slippers.

"And now what? You begged me, and I came. It's cobwebby, and it's littered with dead leaves. You might have had it swept."

Drawing a breath, he took a step toward her, with a sound half-laugh, half-groan. Then he fell back, his arms that opened as he came, falling at his sides.

"If every star up there had a chanting tongue, the whole of 'em couldn't tell you the half of my love. Fact, Lucy."

Ridiculous as they were, his words seemed to shout; to stir the air like the sound of a trumpet.

"Why did you urge me to come here with you?"

"A fancy, madness, impulse, caprice—how do I know? Lucy, darling!"

She looked at him steadily.

"I rather took it that grandmother told you what she told me on the way here to-night. And that you brought me up here to convince me that the mills of the Janvier gods grind slowly, and so forth?"

His breath caught. "And, yet, Lucy, oh, my darling, you *came?*"

She nodded, smiling; meeting his eyes; her head carried high in a very proud way.

* * * * * *

Long after, Lucy recalled this moment of her surrender; resummoning to her mind its every aspect; her every comprehension of what was happening.

And this is love? So she had asked herself. Wherein the senses swoon? Whose ecstasy is more than all else of life?

Whereupon she had withdrawn herself from Stephen's arms; from the touch of his lips. Telling herself that to prolong the moment were to die; or surviving, to permit it to be touched with grossness. She had not known it was in herself so to love; and so to be happy, loved.

* * * * * *

When Stephen and Lucy returned below stairs to the parlor, its windows open to any passing breath of the night, their reappearance was unnoticed. Charlie, who went in the doorway ahead of them, had the floor.

An oddness was in his voice, akin to and not quite a tremor, as with one wrought on by the news he brings, and the more desirous of going on record as averse to things sensational.

"It was Henderson at the telephone."

He said this deprecatingly, and addressed himself to his father. Henderson, an intimate and crony of

Charlie's, was the night editor of one of the local newspapers.

"He gave me the news just in over the wires. He says they'll have a special on the streets by the time I'm telling it. German troops to-day crossed the French frontier at three different points."

The group addressed was above the general average in intelligence, and acquaintance with affairs. According to its several points of view, and its individual idiosyncrasies it broke into comment:

MR. STEPHEN JANVIER.—Incredible!

MRS. STEPHEN JANVIER.—If it's true.

EVELYN.—Dickie Henderson's stringing you, Charlie. *(Then as an afterthought)* Why, Mother's in Paris this moment, waiting there for Father to join her!

MR. STEPHEN JANVIER.—It's the beginning. Bismarck and his doctrine; *the iron man.*

MRS. WING.—Damn those Balkans!

COLONEL TECUMSEH CRAIG *(scion of* 1812*)*.—The crime of the Crimea. That old buried sin lifting its head.

HELEN *(the Virginian)*.—England will hold the peace; England will prevent it.

MR. STEPHEN JANVIER.—Did Henderson say if they came through Luxembourg, Charlie? Germany can't violate the neutrality of Belgium.

MRS. WING.—Women will never permit a general European war. Let 'em get together. Let 'em call Ellen Key and Olive Schreiner to organize 'em.

CHARLIE.—What do you suppose it'll do to the market, Dad? And what to Wall Street? There'll be times just ahead, I'm thinking, to hold on to gilt-edge securities if you've got 'em!

MR. STEPHEN JANVIER *(his voice prevailing, and at the end holding the floor. Its customary urbanity and suavity were gone out of it, and it was direct and crisp).*—My brother Charlie and I—your father, Stevie—little chaps of eight and six, were in Paris with our parents in the '70's, when the Germans crossed the frontier before. We were there for some years following the close of the war here at home, we Janviers having been pretty notorious rebels.

CHAPTER XVI

THIS is no story of what followed in Europe. It is the story of how Lucy Wing, feeling herself betrayed, reacted to certain events that followed. Looking back on these things, they seem now to the mind to be unreasonable. That the lover overnight will leave his new-found love; the husband his wife; the father his children; yes, and as we now know, the woman her family group; to us who ourselves were of it, and in it, and with it, the psychology of war already is become inexplicable.

From these initial days of the start, the war came between Lucy and Stephen. Intangible in its workings at first, little by little it separated them; as if an opaque veil, maddening in its persisting power to come between, fell athwart the two. It dulled for her the joy of her first meeting with him on the day after her surrender, as she saw it, to his enfolding arms. He had come for the afternoon and dinner. She came downstairs and found him and her grandmother at odds. Mrs. Wing had the floor and spoke hotly:

"I'm not saying you're not a consistent male, young man, bold to see justification for war where war is. In this, along with your fellow male creatures, wanting ballast rather than canvas. I'm saying entirely a different thing, which is this: Annihilate by some happy stroke of fate, the professional diplomats throughout Europe, and this death grapple on to-day,

however outrageous the provocation, will stop of itself to-morrow. *Decry* war; this war; any war; all war. In Christ's name, don't *condone* it!"

* * * * * *

The end came six months later. It can be said, however, that Lucy was unprepared. That she succeeded in so dulling her apprehensions, that she so deceived herself as to the extent of Stephen's mental travelings, seems incredible. Incredible most of all, in retrospect, to herself. Being in love, she locked the doors of her mind to what she was resolved *not* to see.

It was January, and the two Janvier families, since October, were returned to the city. Stephen unheralded, appeared one forenoon at Ashe. Lucy came down to him promptly.

He was waiting for her at the foot of the stairs, and they walked the length of the hall to the parlor together. Her face wore no mask these days as to her happiness through and with him, and she looked at him with smiling inquiry; her eyes beneath the lines of her dark brows, and even the firm and lovely curves about them, seemed to glow.

Arrived within the square old room, he took her in his arms, holding her long and close.

Her face caught terror from his, pale as she now saw it was, and drawn. She heard him breathing hard.

"What is it, Stephen?" She seized his hand in both her own.

He led her to a sofa, put her on it and sat beside her. He in his turn took *her* hands, and looked at her.

"I've caught up with myself, honey. I know now what I've got to do. I've been like the man of the Scriptures, torn by seven devils; devils or angels as we

look at it, setting up their shout inside of me. I've forborne asking you to marry me, knowing as I did this was coming. Lucy, *I've got to get into this fight!*"

She withdrew her hands while he was speaking, shrinking from him, incredulity in her every aspect. Now a burning blush rushed over her face. She struggled to her feet, he rising with her.

He nodded sorrowfully. "Just that, my darling."

She looked at him, bringing her hands together, palm to palm, a little wildly, and laughed, incredulous still. It was as if the world that for twenty years had gone very well for her indeed, had paused with a jolt of hideous dislocation, and now was going the other way.

"I didn't come hoping to make it appear sensible, my darling, or reasonable; but to tell you. I might say to you that my interest in the freedom of man is a greater part of me than I knew. But I won't. I won't endeavor to explain it."

She pushed back a step further from him. Colorless by now, coldly erect and seemingly taller, one read her nevertheless to be aflame with anger.

"And *I'm* nothing to you?"

"Are everything."

"In such event—am nothing."

"Are all, my darling. Don't make it harder. *Can't you see?*"

"I see that when men love women, they give them what portion of their lives it pleases them. But when women love they give all. I see this. And I see that with all the rest of women, I, too, have been a fool!"

"Lucy!"

"Why did you thrust yourself into my life? I was

content. Why did you break into my affection? Why did I let you through my resolves? But—Stephen—I know, I *know*—you don't mean it!"

"Lucy, won't you be even a *little* kind?"

The corrosive of resentment at this invaded her, heart and mind; entered and possessed her.

" 'Love for man turns women into martyrs.' I read this some place. But it shall not turn me. I'm being asked by you, to be part with so beastly—so bestial—an instrument as *war?*"

"Listen to me, Lucy. Woman's generosity to man is man's making. Since time was this is true. Her willingness to grasp what is best in him fortifies this best in him against the less decent. Be with me in this."

She turned and hurried from the parlor.

He followed, numb with the realization of how the young perfection of her struck into the heart of his being.

She hurried through the doorway of the sitting room across the hall.

It was not yet noon, but Mrs. Wing, weary evidently with the business of her start for the day, was fallen into a doze in her chair.

Wee and weazened and exhausted she looked, her head drooped forward; the million wrinkles making up the parchment skin of her face seen in the cruel light of the morning sun.

These days were going hard with her. An attitude alien to the world of war, was become an obsession with her; a justification indeed of much of her past; and she refused to yield to any claim upon her in this present one.

She roused as Lucy reached her; sat up in her chair; took a look at her grandchild; gave one to Stephen

following in Lucy's wake; and alert and keen, lent attention. She showed anxiety, but no surprise.

"Grandmother—exactly *what's* the story, exactly *why* did you give up Stephen's grandfather?"

The burning old eyes went from the one to the other, from her child, to her child's lover.

"He chose a war of aggression and spoils to me. I suffered. The depth of her affection is the measure which determines a woman's capacity for unhappiness. Love once truly given—I have come to believe—is basic and eternal. Nearing ninety, I suffer still. *But I was right!*"

"Stephen chooses war to me, grandmother. He tells me he is going, expecting to take part in this one. In which event I feel myself compelled to give him back his love."

The sardonic shrillness in the old voice responding, was appalling; its bitter fury, amazing.

"History then does repeat itself? We in our egotism are but a vain and pretentious lot of cockatoos? And wisdom died with Solomon, the Preacher, King over Israel in Jerusalem: *The thing that hath been, it is that which shall be; and that which is done is that which shall be done; and there is no new thing under the sun!*"

The eyes of the infuriated old woman swept the young man, head to foot, standing here before her. "No better then, and no worse, than your grandfather! The eternal male repeated in you! Following the circle you arrive back at the starting place, and so complete the treadmill of the generations!"

Stephen looking at her, yet looked past her. The hornets of self-questioning which so had tormented him, buzzed around the vulnerable parts of his mind again. Was she correct? Was this necessity upon him

to go, the original man in him after all? The lust to war that had drowsed and nodded beside the inner fire of his being, as do grandsires at the hearths of their children's children?

"As to that, Mrs. Wing, can a man after all be other than he is?"

"Ha!" she cried, "say no more, if you please, to me. I know the whole litany of man's argument when to war and arms he'd turn. And what of my grandchild? Is woman—forever secondary, so it would appear—always to meet and follow man's needs? Hear me, young man. Men are proverbially blind, proverbially selfish, and amazingly stupid, where women are concerned. I may say there never has been a man who really understood any woman. It's that women by long training through the centuries, are constitutional actresses, and also liars; yielding themselves to man's conceptions of them, and by playing thus upon his vanity, holding his affections."

Again those hornets buzzed within the mind of Stephen. Had he in his desire for Lucy, been pretty much a law unto himself? Had a whimsical and selfish individualism summed up his philosophy of life? There are caprices in the reason, as he well knew, where heart and mind dupe one another.

Lucy was speaking, and quietly. "I think you owe Stephen an apology, grandmother. Our right to hold him answerable, ended with his announced decision."

"I ask Stephen's pardon for helping him to the truth?" cried Mrs. Wing, if possible more imperiously furious than before. "On the contrary, I reiterate all I've said. And I'll add a word here. Don't hope to convert Lucy. I for one, don't intend to permit her to be persuaded."

She seemed struck at this with another thought. Her voice dropped and became conversational. "Where and how is your friend, Lelewel? With his creed of internationalism of thought? Another fool, he!"

"He's disappeared. I forgot to mention it. He dropped out of things back in the autumn; disappearing soon after the start of the trouble over there."

"And the wife and the boy?"

"He appears to have failed 'em, somehow. She's heard from him just once since he left. She came to our office to consult me as a lawyer. She seems to feel his union ought to help her. She says her mother is dead—and there's nothing more for her in Cincinnati, her former home, than here. I advised her to go to work."

Mrs. Wing laughed again. "The old story. Again the eternal masculine!"

She leaned back in her chair. Her tone like her words, seemed by intention, impersonal and unimpassioned. "Well, this country's better off at any time without his kind. As far back as Jefferson's day, he held that it's an error to attract artificers and mechanics from foreign parts to our shores. Those who labor in the earth, the husbandmen, he held to be the desirable immigrant. Said he, as I recall his words, 'I consider the class of artificers as the panders of vice, and the instruments by which the liberties of a country are generally overturned.' "

* * * * * *

The next day Stephen's mother came out from the city to Ashe.

Lucy came down, bringing the excuses of her grandmother, who was spending the day in bed.

Helen was the well-dressed woman, from the turn of her small hat's brim, to the hang of her tailored skirt. Her fair hair was lustrous, and as always, in perfect order. She seemed to have just left the hands of some competent maid, so fresh, so fragrant, so immaculate, she was. Yet she, like the generality of southern women, was her own maid.

The first exchange of greetings over, she, after a moment's irresolution, took in hers both of Lucy's hands. She thought a ghost of a tremor shook the girl's lips, but she wasn't sure.

The older woman's heart ached as she gazed at the younger. The girl in Lucy had vanished; had left her forever, Helen feared. This was a woman, her every feature deepened, quickened with shock. A woman whose erstwhile latent instincts, passive creeds, passive prejudices, overnight had become conscious forces. The small, full mouth had lost the curves of girlhood; these lips were locked upon pain. Her first swift and hot resentment toward Stephen, it was evident had endured.

Helen went straight to the heart of the self-appointed purpose bringing her here.

"My Stephen, Lucy, is a creature of directness, fervor and simplicity. If he feels he *has* to go, darling, you and I may as well face the inevitable. I have known him, you see, from his birth; *he will go.*"

Lucy withdrew her hands. She saw to it that Helen was seated; herself taking a chair near by, and indicating that she was ready again to listen. Since yesterday she had remained quiet; benumbed with anger and amazement. To her position in defense of the mighty claims of love, was added the indignation of a woman who considers that she has been betrayed,

robbed, played with. She had that outraged, choking sensation which a child feels when an adult strikes it, whether with or without justice, and goes his way, leaving the victim helpless and without redress. Now and then she had trembled; and once or twice she had cried. Reaching this point, each time the same horror, and the same incredulity, had come again upon her; the same indignation and the sense of outrage. And she had hurried to her feet, to walk feverishly about the house; or into the yard with its wintry aspect, its patches of lingering snow, its stark and white-limbed sycamores, blue-black spruces, black-massed pines. Once she found herself beyond the frozen fields on the banks of the ice-bound creek, dully watching some Negro children from a cabin on the farther shore, slide on a glassy path which as she gazed, they swept clean of snow again with the nubbin of an old broom.

Helen's eyes were on Lucy's face. A little fold of suffering showed between her own brows, and she talked with effort.

"An inward spring is necessary to natures such as Stephen's, Lucy. When he ceases to believe in joy; when he ceases, as he would put it, to be in love with life and love, the best of him will be gone. His is a healthy vigor, which as yet, tolerates in himself nothing sour or gloomy. It's hard to comprehend, or to estimate, if we think about it, what the value is to the world of such a nature; what its use to society. Shall you and I, can we, through his faith in us, help to keep him as he is?"

Lucy was silent. She listened. Totally unaware, such being the self-absorption of youth, such its shell of impenetrability, such its submersion in its own sufferings, that this mother of Stephen, who was pleading

her son's cause, had been and was, enduring agony equal to her own.

"Night in and out, Lucy, I've heard him in his room, walking to and fro. I asked God to spare me this Gethsemane a second time. I cried to Him that I lacked the vital courage to go through with this demand on me again. I went through it with Stephen's father, you see."

She paused; found the self-control she sought, and went on. "When yesterday morning, Stephen at daylight came into my room after a night of such pacing, I knew it was come. I foresaw what he had to tell me, and realized the futility of anything I might say."

Again she paused; and again went on. "He sat on the edge of the bed beside me. He took my hands. 'I'm most frightfully fond of you, you see, Mummy,' he said; 'so I've come to tell you it seems obligatory for me to get into this miserable fight.' "

Helen's voice was level and even. "Shall I tell you how my son looked to me at that moment, as he sat beside me, in the white light of the growing dawn? He had the look to me of an eagle, needs must about to mount."

Lucy to this, spoke with irony. "Men always have looked upon war as an heroic thing. Women know that it's insane."

Helen arose, and going to the girl, took her hands again. Such cold, pitiful young hands.

"We'll only get anywhere, Lucy darling, you and I, by facing conditions as they are. It's not what you or I think about it, but what *is*. The mixture in my son of dash and steadfastness, that I met first and learned to know in his father, makes for a certain tenacity.

Nothing I, or any other person brought to bear upon him in the past, ever moved him from his moral anchorage as he saw it, once he was convinced he was there. Perhaps human beings, prone to error, should not be like this; but various of them are. And not to admit realities when these face us, is the reverse of sensible. It's hard for me to say this, Lucy; as hard for me—who suffer also—as for you. But since Stephen feels he must go, there is nothing for you and me but the fact; *he will go.*"

She stood up. Had she said too much? Said the right thing, or the wrong? Understanding the girl's pain and her unhappiness, her older heart ached, apart from its quota of personal misery.

"May Stephen come out, Lucy? He wonders how you feel about seeing him? About hearing from him direct, as to his purposes and plans?"

* * * * * *

Lucy saw Stephen when he came. There was nothing petty in the girl. It did not occur to her to pretend that she did not find her happiness in him. Frightened by the pain she saw ahead of her, by the black misery of the future, driven beyond herself with the suffering of losing him, she saw as it were a door opening to her. Convinced she was right, she took it.

"Marry me, Stephen; now; to-day, if you say; and stay?"

A peculiar line crept about his mouth. Looking at her, he smiled faintly. That this smile hid suffering was evident. He put out his hands to her, and let them fall with hopelessness, at his sides. He spoke as one whose strength does but serve thus far, with nothing over and to spare.

"I'm no doubt the dub I appear. As I said in my letter yesterday to Warrington Adams, probably to everybody but myself, it appears a piece of bonehead botching. How can I marry you, Lucy, since you feel as you do? And when I know I am to go?"

His lips as was their way under their owner's stress, went twisted. His resolves crashed about him. He, as he full well knew, was more human than she.

"Marry me despite it, darling. I did not mean to ask it of you, but I do. Marry me with no thought other than we do love. When this mess is over, I'll be back."

A deep flush replaced the recent pallor of the girl's cheeks. Her brows had knitted.

The tap of a cane sounded along the floor of the hall, and Mrs. Wing came into the parlor.

"Well, Stephen. Glad and sorry to see you. Don't hope to persuade Lucy to your way of thinking. I for one, as I told you, don't intend to permit her to be persuaded."

She looked from him to Lucy, and back again; satisfied apparently by what she read.

"Mine, no doubt, my dear boy, is a cruel order of intelligence. As your Uncle Stephen once told me to my face, in these very words I use, in a passage-at-arms in a magistrate's court. I had brought the charge against the son, as it happened, of his colored butler, for trespassing, and he had appointed himself to defend him. But such as this intelligence of mine is, it does not willingly hoodwink itself as yours right now hoodwinks you."

She hobbled to him, and put a hand on his arm.

"Do I not know the stuff that has snared you, my dear boy; the platitudinous catchwords and phrases

that in all wars are spread—as lime upon the twig for the bird—to catch and to capture the unwary?"

She peered up, seeking to see and to read his face. "I know these catchwords of old, my boy. As for example: *It's the object of war, that makes it or not, honorable. A righteous war is one whose purpose is derived from a hatred of war. No nation and no people must be allowed to provoke free men of free wills, with impunity. The bad old era, where might is right, is now to be done away with forever. In a just cause morality is the largest asset. The moral weakness in an unjust cause is its greatest liability.* Phrases such as these, Stephen, are not new. *Thrice is he armed who hath his quarrel just.* I could keep on, as you see, indefinitely."

She smote the floor at her feet, "Old, old, these salves to conscience, Stephen; old as man himself. War, with men, appears to be an instinct. And I for my part have no belief in the immutability of instinct. Man were forever then a slave, fixed in his limitations. There is no instinct, however deep-planted because longest held to, that man cannot master. And the instinct for war is one of these. *Lay down your arms!*"

Again she peered, seeking to read his face. "Shall I tell you what I have endeavored to have Lucy from her childhood see in history? Battles, sieges, defeats and reverses, victories; the overthrow of kings and kingdoms; terms of peace; leading inevitably to subsequent fresh hostilities, new overthrows, and fresh negotiations, soil again for discontents; an ever-recurring and ever-vicious circle. Put this point of view in your pipe if you will, and go home and smoke it. Maybe it will bring you to your senses."

* * * * * *

Stephen's preparations went on. There was business of divers natures to be attended to.

The day before he was to leave to join his uncle in Washington, he came to Ashe, and as usual Lucy came down to him.

"Lucy!"

"Yes?"

"You do love me? Love me, as you and I concede this to mean?"

"I don't seem able to help it, Stephen."

"Then marry me. Your grandmother is an old woman. Let me have the right to put you in my mother's arms before I go, and in Uncle Stephen's protection."

"I'll marry you within the next hour if you'll give up this idea, and stay."

* * * * * *

Stephen awoke the next morning in a flood of brightest winter sunshine. His bed, the floor with its rugs, the walls with their patterned papering, were bathed with it.

It was his way; every blind was up; each curtain thrust aside, and the outside shutters spread wide.

It was a back room; the bare-twigged branches of an ancient peach tree rose above the sill of one of the open windows; the outside air, streaming in along with the rays of the mounting sun, was frosty; the sounds of a winter morning in a city neighborhood reached him.

To bathe and dress did not take him overlong. It was Tuesday. He would leave at noon to-day for Washington. On Thursday his mother would follow him, joining him and his uncle in New York. The date of his sailing from that city was indeterminate;

conditional on the news he would find awaiting him in Washington.

Upstanding and intent, he buttoned his vest and getting into his coat, went down to his mother and breakfast. For his convenience the meal this morning was ordered an hour early. From the breakfast table he was going to Ashe, using his car to get there.

* * * * * *

Mrs. Wing, Lucy, and Miss Kitty McKane were at breakfast when he came in to them, in the big and comfortable dining room. Here too, the morning sun striped the wall and the floor. A Wedgewood pitcher stood on a silver tray in the center of the breakfast table, a receptacle for a dozen stalks of white flowers.

Lucy arose from the table and joined him, the two going slowly back along the hall. Arrived in the parlor, he caught her to him.

"Marry me, Lucy. My car's at the door, and if I telephone in to Charlie he'll make things ready for us by the time we get there."

"You to leave me then, and go?"

"Just that, my darling."

She looked at him, very pale; then withdrew herself from his arms, her eyes still fastened on his face; backing against the wall, her hands seeking it behind her, as for support.

Seeing it was futile, he reached her with a stride, found her hands, drew them around to him and kissed them with an endless kiss as it were. Then dropped them and turned and went.

* * * * * *

When she followed, he was gone; and her grandmother and Miss Kitty were in the hall where they had come to say good-by.

She would have none of either of them.

"I prefer to go to my room and be by myself."

Her eyes were quite dry; her face was composed. It so happened she ever afterward was spoken of as a beautiful young woman singularly without color.

CHAPTER XVII

THE two women left standing in the hall gazed at one another, eyes meeting eyes. They had the air of creatures who in the midst of walls toppling about them, crouch and flinch.

Then Mrs. Wing began to tremble. "My lamb, my ewe lamb, the one thing I ever loved better than myself!"

And for the third time in her life she went into hysterics; once within two hours of her marriage to John Wing; again when the coffin arrived bringing from the battlefield of Chickamauga, the body of her only child. This time it was the dry-eyed cackling hysteria of age.

Ellen Jackson appeared, with her Coptic cheek bones, and her authoritative voice, and between them they got her upstairs to her room and to bed. She raised on her pillow by and by, and clutched Kitty by the wrist.

"I see it, I see what will happen. She'll not visit it on Stephen. She'll remember it, and visit it all her life on me!"

"As she should!" said Kitty McKane. And shut her lips, lest she say any more.

The old eyes, faded scraps of blue far back in their cavernous retreats, leaped to life, hot with fury.

"I took you, Kitty McKane, the child of an emi-

grant, a man who neither could read nor write, and *made you!*"

"Neither can you say I've not been *grateful!*" said Miss McKane.

* * * * * *

Sometime in the forenight she called again for Kitty.

"You've been at the telephone on this floor more than once this evening?"

Miss McKane, blonde and grim, looked down upon her long-time patron, friend, and tyrant. The blondeness was achieved: the grimness was come from the handling through many years of a clientele of women.

"You're not to say ever again I haven't paid my debt to you."

"What do you mean, Kitty McKane?"

"After talking matters over with Mrs. Stephen Janvier, I got on the long distance with Mother Mary Gertrude at Our Lady. If Lucy will trust herself to me, we're going down by train to her to-morrow."

Mrs. Wing reached out a hand and, finding the old-fashioned bell cord that hung at her head, jerked it again and again.

Ellen appeared.

"Call Henry; get on the stable telephone and tell him to dress, and bring the car to the door. Then help Miss Kitty here get her things together. She's returning to her own home. Interfere, would you, Kitty McKane? Set my own child, in my own house, against me? Philippa Janvier has no nearer made out her case in life than I have mine. And of the two of us, I'm the one whose eyes in behalf of women look beyond and ahead!"

She was trembling; weeping; hiccoughing. And with these things terror came again upon her; the terror

of a too feeble creature, who knows how slender is the hold that keeps her here. She clung anew, now to Kitty, now to Ellen, the two people in the world who could do the most with her. When they ceased their ministrations, it was into the night, and Mrs. Wing was asleep.

* * * * * *

It was three o'clock when Miss Kitty and Lucy left Ashe for the city, there to take the train. It was six o'clock, and the wintry dusk was closed down when, in the carryall belonging to the school, they reached the clustered buildings in their setting of snow-sprinkled lawn and bare shrubberies.

The blow had struck at the very springs of Lucy's being, and her face looked pinched and sharpened. Why she was here she could not have said. Kitty McKane who never failed her, had asked her to come.

Of all the factors which may accompany unhappiness, inaction is the hardest to endure. Behind her, at the moment that Kitty proposed it, stretched a sleepless night; ahead of her was an impotent to-day. She shrank from seeing her grandmother, as from the person who too fiercely had sustained her. She could not bring her sore mind yet to contemplate meeting any of her own young friends who might come to her. She was here because it was easier to come than to stay.

* * * * * *

Mother Gertrude, as before, welcomed them in her office sitting room, serene, equable and portly.

She took Lucy's hands. "I thank you, dear child, for coming. And I thank Kitty for bringing you. Stephen came down the day before yesterday to say good-by. Anne and Charlie were with him. Shall I tell you what his farewell to me was?"

The old nun laughed briskly. "Here are his words: *'Au revoir,* old sport. A happy reunion somehow, somewhere, sometime!' "

She dropped Lucy's hands. "And now I think you'll both like to go to your rooms."

* * * * * *

Supper for the two guests was over. A coal fire blazed ruddy and clear in the grate of Mother Gertrude's sitting room. Little Sister Veronica, perpetually and tenderly young, appeared at the door, and Miss Kitty arose and joined her.

"We have," she said to the Mother, "three months' arrears of accumulated matters, large and small, to talk over. When Sister Veronica's duties reclaim her, I'll go to my room."

* * * * * *

Left with Lucy, the old nun sighed. But she was resolute to come to the point.

The girl was seated in an armchair. The firelight played on her features. The face was tense and set.

"Poor, poor child; poor Stephen; poor both of you."

Pity dominated the voice. "I used to wonder why these things of the soul must be; heartbreak, renunciation, anguish; apart as they are from merited suffering sprung from cardinal and willful sin. The question is unanswered for me; I wonder still."

She sighed. "Happiness, I'm more than convinced, is a factor in the spiritual growth of the individual, as potent as suffering. When I see what the sun will do for a puny seedling transplanted from the shade to an open border, I'm inclined to give the superior claim to happiness. It may be that our error is too much to consider the individual; the gain in fiber and in moral

strength through the individual suffering may be to the race."

She brought a hand screen to the girl; an old-fashioned affair of wood, painted in flowers, and shellacked.

She sat down. "I warn you, Lucy, that I'm going to preach. It's my vocation, you see."

She smiled. "What else has three-score and ten to offer one score, but of its wisdom, fruit of its years? If wisdom it be? Lucy, it is as old as the eternal verities, this struggle between man and woman. Give, child, give. It is the divine plan. Only those women who crucify their affections, find them. I speak as one who whatever the right or the wrong of her position, lost hers. Give, Lucy, I beg you. It is woman's destiny."

She gazed at the stern young face. Her own face within its linen coif was thoughtful. Then she turned to the table beside her, and took up a red leather portfolio. It was worn and faded, and tied with yellowed tapes. There were some papers on the table, and a small leather-bound book.

"At my solicitation, Anne sent these down to me by Kitty, who also brought you," she smiled. "I only ask you hear me out, Lucy. I don't promise that I'll not be tedious."

She selected a page from here and there among the papers in the portfolio. "America's truly *great* poet, I mean Whitman, calls our attention as a people, to an ever-present factor that we're prone to forget. He says to us Americans, *''Tis not the Present only, the Past is also stored in thee.'* I want you to consider Stephen a bit, in the light of his past. I've some notes

here in my hand, made by myself years ago about some Janviers dead and gone; in this portfolio are the introductory pages of a memoir, never completed, begun by one Etienne Janvier in 1793, while in prison. This book, with its lock and key, is the journal of Julie Janvier, written somewhere about 1800, and dedicated to her husband. The characters on these pages are faded, and the French of that day is often a bit puzzling. With your promise of patience, I'll follow the story through the medium of my own old notes."

A Sister came in, and set down on a table near Lucy, a tray with sandwiches, and a glass of wine.

"Ah, here it is." Mother Gertrude nodded approval. "Sister Hildegarde here, came to me a little ago, distressed and worried; she noticed in the refectory that you ate no supper."

The tall young Sister in her habit withdrew. A tear slid over Lucy's lid and rolled down her cheek.

The noises of the routine life beyond the door, reached the two; the sound of a bell; of a hymn sung by high, young voices; the rhythm of marching, retreating feet.

Against these evidences of the life outside, rose and fell the tones of her who in the world was Philippa Janvier, now narrating, now reading to Lucy. If at the start the face of the girl was passive, at the close it was cold and stern.

CHAPTER XVIII

"I'M asking you, Lucy, to hear the story of Etienne Janvier, the Girondist; and of his sister, Julie, who the betrothed of her cousin, Charles Janvier, was herself in love with the young Louis Philippe, the son of the Duke of Orleans, the Jacobin, and revolutionist. How far these things went into the making of your Stephen, along with the usual tales that make life glorious to a boy, who shall say?"

The old nun paused, sighed, then took her story up briskly again. "My own father was the oldest child of this Charles and Julie; and he told this same story to me often when I was a child. I sitting close against his knee, as my brother, fourteen years my senior, and who in time was to love Lucy Routt and lose her, had heard it before me.

"I, in my turn, Lucy, a woman entered into orders, told it to the next two generations; to the two sons of this brother; and to your Stephen, and Charlie his cousin."

She sat erect. "There are two types of Janviers, and always have been; the sane, rational, cool-headed, and even cool-blooded Janvier. And the pure, the exalted, if you will, *romantic.* Julie Janvier was the pure romantic. Charles, her cousin, whom she married, was the rational. In Etienne, the brother, these traits met, making what I claim, is the highest expression of mankind in any race—*the romantic-realist!* I glanced

through these old notes of mine while you were at supper, and I find that my narrative moves through Julie, the woman. Hers is the minor story. But it must go."

Lucy surveyed her Aunt Philippa. The old *religieuse* saw her smile.

"And what, my child?"

"The age-old assumption that *perforce* the woman's is the minor story. I for one already see that if rightly read, the woman's never is!"

"My dear, my dear; I see you indeed are Lucy Routt's child! I will start with a fragment from the memoir of Etienne. What as history is trite to you and me, my dear, was to him as he set it down, new with the awfulness of the blood-price. Does it occur to you that your Stephen may regard it as a part of his heritage, to pay this blood price if necessary, again?"

This time Lucy laughed bitterly. "And *his* son, and his *son's* son in their turns, pay it again? However, get on with it, Aunt Philippa. I'll be a listener."

"Thank you, my child. It's not with the thought to win you to my view of life, that I ask you to hear me. But that I, perhaps, may bring you nearer to comprehending the view of Stephen."

Again she picked up her story briskly. "This Etienne Janvier was a young *avocat* of Marseilles. He came of a Provençal family of means and standing, descended through one line, the Arnaulds, from the nobility. The ferment of modern ideas reached Marseilles early. He was an habitué of the clubs there, and also at Lyons, where he early became a protégé of M. and Madame Roland, whose influence was wide and powerful. On the death of his parents, he removed to Paris, bringing with him his sister, Julie.

"He tells us in the opening paragraphs of his memoir, and as it seems to us now naïvely, that 'Rousseau, the Encyclopedia, Voltaire, the cafés, and the clubs, had done their work among *the young men of France.*' He adds that 'if ever circumstances were favorable to revolution, it was then. The misery of the French people, the character of Louis XVI, the American Revolution, the ferment of ideas generally, alike were factors.'

"So it was, he assures us, 'that a faith of new convictions had awakened, sufficient to strengthen *the young men of France* to face death for their principles!' His explanation for this being that *'it lifted their minds above the common-day life and its values and affairs!'*

"The sister, Julie, in her journal written ten years later, describes him:

" *'Le bel homme,* my brother often was called among his friends. He was older than I, being twenty-three at this time. His eyes set wide apart, were smiling and yet piercing. His voice seemed to come from a passionate soul, yet to the accompaniment of a manner tranquil and humorous. He had a lofty forehead and full, an eagle-keen and distinguished profile; and a mouth truly sensitive even in repose. The whole glowed with an ardor at once of fire and of intelligence; and bloomed with the lingering touch of adolescent youth. His dress, according to the hour, was foppish; his curling hair falling to his shoulders; a tasseled cane forever in his hand!' "

The old mother paused. "I take up my own narrative here again, Lucy. Established in Paris, Etienne's rooms became the gathering place for certain young men, among these his cousin Charles Janvier, a subal-

tern in the school of engineers, the son of General Simon Hippolyte Arnauld Janvier. Caught into the vortex of thought to which Etienne introduced him, both at his own rooms and at the clubs, the day came when Charles knew and avowed himself for what Stephen stood declared, a Girondist.

"Here is a sentence from Etienne's memoir concerning these gatherings: 'In the conversations of the young men of France, was born the spirit of the revolution.' "

LUCY.—I promised I would listen. But where in these conversations breeding revolution, was the voice of the young women? What of Julie? Get on, Aunt Philippa, I'll be good.

MOTHER GERTRUDE.—Among the young men who frequented the rooms of Etienne, was the son of the Duc d'Orleans, the Duc de Chartres. Etienne describes him as a serious and shrewd boy, of prodigious memory and fine accomplishments; these last due to his early gouverneur, Madame de Genlis. He was seventeen years of age. "The Girondes," comments Etienne proudly, "were the contribution to the world of youth!"

LUCY.—And this young man's training and accomplishments, as you've just said, were the contribution through him to the world of a *woman,* his early gouverneur. Where in these councils were the women who had mothered these young men? Forgive me, and proceed.

MOTHER GERTRUDE.—Julie, who lived with her brother, and with the assistance of an elderly woman servant, kept his home, also was seventeen.

LUCY.—As always; kept *his* house.

MOTHER GERTRUDE.—The brother writes of her: "My sister at seventeen was young, radiant; with intelligence, and the gift of laughter. Her air was tantalizing, with something illusive in her poise, and in her quick and airy movements. Her voice and manner were agreeable, and she had a gift of conversation, pleasing through an ability to see that which was amusing in the world around her."

Julie says of herself: "I was a smiling *petite;* gay and frolicsome; not at any time of my life sensual; but delighting to please, and to shine. *'Nymphe,'* my cousin Charles in those days called me. *'Intrigante,'* and *'mignonne,'* my sometimes vexed brother."

The young Louis Philippe and Julie being thrown together, the boy for the time being fell in love with her. And she, yielding—so she tells us—"to his youth and his quaint seriousness," fell in love with him for all time. She says concerning him that "if he ran with the Girondists by conviction, through caution he united with the Jacobins, with whom his father consorted; the father being accused of affiliating with all creeds for purposes of his own." We have her word that the son was honest.

LUCY.—If she says so, we'll admit it. Still it's disturbing to our faith that he "for the time *being* fell in love with her."

MOTHER GERTRUDE.—It was the autumn of 1789. The fourteenth of July, the fall of the Bastille was three months' past. The old municipality of Paris was swept away, and a new Paris militia under Lafayette, had taken its place. The tricolor had come into existence, the red and blue—she tells us—were the old colors of Paris; and the white stood for the new.

LUCY.—She seems intelligent. Fairly able to formulate an opinion.

MOTHER GERTRUDE.—It was October, and the Jacobins, whose powers were increasing, were beginning to take the lead in the affairs of the more advanced of the revolutionists. Affiliated now throughout France, they were become indeed the rivals of the Girondes. Marseilles, the home of Etienne and Julie, was the stronghold of the Girondes outside of Paris.

Etienne came to Julie. Her account follows: "Said my brother, 'Marseilles has sent to Paris for leaders. Barbaroux needs help. The fact that it is my native place led to me being chosen. Charles goes with us. He is open to arrest at any moment here. Our uncle has been recalled by the king, together with the companies under him, forming the garrison at Corsica. He will be the first, if I know him, to apprehend his renegade son. Get together such things as the three of us are obliged to have. We leave to-night by the Paris and Marseilles coach.' "

LUCY.—Hers but to obey.

MOTHER GERTRUDE.—She tells us that her heart grew cold and still. That she ventured to speak: "And the Duc de Chartres? He was to join us here at supper this evening?" She adds that "Etienne was obstinately, was it perversely, blind?" And gives us his reply: " 'I confided to you the rumor touching his father. It is verified. Philippe Egalité has been compelled by Lafayette to leave France. He has taken refuge in England. The boy is in good standing with the Girondists, and will not be molested. For reasons of our own, he is aligned for the time with the Jacobins. Indeed he is the doorkeeper this afternoon at the Jacobin Club in rue St. Honoré, the members taking this

honor in rotation; old 'Sieur Lais, the opera singer, being the other; I will see that a message reaches him there.' "

Julie's preparations for the journey being completed, she tells us that she took her old woman servant, and thus attended, went to the Church of St. Roche. Waiting here, she sent the woman to the rue St. Honoré with instructions to approach the entrance of the Jacobin gathering place, and if possible, obtain speech with Louis Philippe.

LUCY.—She had initiative. She knew her mind. She could act.

MOTHER GERTRUDE.—He returned with the woman, coming himself to St. Roche. She describes him: "He was grave both of aspect and of speech, but as I see now, a boy. He wore a coat of green, I remember well, with silver embroidery; not showy, indeed on the whole somber; and the cockade of red, blue, and white. But the features of his face, the gravity of his eyes joined to their youthful clarity; the fineness of his skin and his pronounced pallor; these remained with me rather than his dress. I had given him my heart, and at that time, I, the daughter of a Marseilles *avocat,* held his.

"He joined me in the church, and took my hand. We withdrew further within the shadows of the nave of the church. He spoke from a full heart." *Le cœur saoul,* she puts it. " 'Because I love you well, Julie,' he told me, 'I love my honor the more. There are times when fortune begins but cannot complete her work. We young men of France are sworn to forego ease, joy, happiness, life itself, for the future of the State. We will meet again, you and I. I feel it. My father is in jeopardy, and I hardly know where for safety, I myself stand. If in the meanwhile our hearts

fail us, yours, Julie, and mine, let us remember to say, *It is for France.*' "

LUCY.—The generations repeat themselves, I, too, begin to see.

MOTHER GERTRUDE.—The cousins left Paris that night by—as she describes it—the lumbering Paris and Marseilles coach; taking their way down through the Rhone valley, through Lyons and Avignon, to Marseilles. Julie pictures the misery of the country and the people, seen as they journeyed.

LUCY.—A man-made country; under a man-made rule.

MOTHER GERTRUDE.—A word should be said here about the third traveler, Charles Janvier, the runaway subaltern. Julie writes of him ten years later: "My husband, now in his thirties, is five feet eleven; slim, erect, with composed features, and observant eyes; a musician; a noted dancer; an intrepid horseman, as is expected of all men here in America. Pleasing in manner, but cool and rational in his views."

LUCY.—She *loved* the boy, you see!

MOTHER GERTRUDE.—Arrived at Marseilles, the cousins took a house in the poorest quarter of the city; a locality as far removed as might be from the former home of Etienne and Julie, which they had inherited and still owned. She refers to this former home, speaking of the geraniums and roses, the oranges and lemons, crepe myrtles and pomegranates, in its garden. She enumerates various of the household treasures that had been left behind.

LUCY.—I say nothing to *this*.

MOTHER GERTRUDE.—She speaks of the miserable quarters they saw fit to occupy. "We were extremely

ill-lodged. We had no place where we could make a fire on account of the ill draught of the chimney. Our small cooking was done on a brazier. We dreaded to think of the approaching winter. The court in which our miserable home stood was the muddiest, the evilest. There was no place I could take a walk, neither garden, nor decent street near by; only alleys very evil. We were shivering already under the mistral, that violent and cold northwest wind that afflicts Marseilles. Etienne and Charles maintained that it was necessary we be thus in obscurity here, avoiding our former surroundings; holding that their work could be pursued with less attendant dangers so."

In the cellar of the old rookery whose ground floor they rented, the two young men set up a hand printing press. Etienne wrote boldly. And issuing forth to the cafés, talked as boldly as did the pamphlets which now began to issue from the press in the cellar. Always, Julie tells us, the two young men were gay; and she with them. She quotes her brother: "If we are issuing our death warrants, we have the satisfaction of knowing that we also are furnishing matter for history; history in the making such as never has been before. Hitherto, Julie, your brother and your cousin have been content to study the history of France; now they *make* it! If we fail; if the time is not ripe in France; America is waiting for us and you."

She did the household work for the three. She tells that about this time she opened her heart to her brother. As she expresses it: "Being in one of those fullnesses of heart common to those who love, I yielded to the desire and owned to my brother my love for the young Louis Philippe. 'Our fathers, my own and my cousin's,

arranged long since that I should marry Charles, Etienne; and I have given my heart where I cannot hope to marry!' "

LUCY.—Had arranged that *she*——! Again I'll say no word.

MOTHER GERTRUDE.—Etienne comforted her: "Egalité, Julie, is a magic word. But it cannot make the impossible possible. Did you suppose I did not see? Did not comprehend? This is a sun of too great magnitude, that for you will never set."

In the records of these twenty months passed at Marseilles, Julie speaks twice again of the young Duc de Chartres. One reference is to a letter from him, conveyed to her by the hand of a fellow Gironde coming to Marseilles. The other reference is to a visit paid by him to Marseilles, in company with Condorcet, marquis, philosopher, and Girondist. Julie and he met at this time—and parted. As she says: "With a sense on my part now of the finality of the unhappy enterprise; and a submission within me perforce to the inevitable."

Life in the wretched surroundings went on. Says Julie: "Etienne or my cousin, would take me abroad with them. I loved the waterside where the Mediterranean trading ships with their lateen sails, were crowded together in this, the greatest port in France. Every language known to a sailor was heard here. At other times, I went by myself to the old Cathedral, beloved of me since my earliest childhood. My father had told me that it superseded a temple of Diana, and that temple had replaced an altar to Baal. I do not know if this be more than legend. It conduced however, to reverie and reflection, as I sat there on the hired stool in the shadows, hidden away in the obscurity,

for fear of recognition by some friend or neighbor of former days. Thus the winter, a summer, and another winter, passed."

At Paris the fortunes of king, Girondes, and Jacobins, continued to rise, fall and contest. At Marseilles the work by pamphlet, and the work by word of mouth, went on. In Strassburg, on the frontier of Alsace, a young Captain of Engineers was quartered. His name was Rouget de l'Isle. The cafés and clubs of Paris had known him, as well as the rooms of Etienne Janvier in Paris. Like the other young men wont to gather there, he was a Girondist.

In May, 1792, on an evening at dark, a tap came at the street-door of the rookery in the court. Etienne and Charles vanished. They waited these days to be sure. Julie opened the door. Rouget de l'Isle came in, throwing off the cloak that muffled him. He wore the tricolor, was in his uniform, and had his sword. She describes him: "What *boursouflé trempe* was here! What flaming petulance! What reckless restlessness! Rouget de l'Isle was neither too fat nor too thin, and had a leg he was frankly proud of. He walked consciously, had a pronounced air, a thick nose, and heavy eyebrows. In character he was volatile, but also obliging and generous. He liked to harangue, and at base was sound and logical, if one had the patience always to hear him out. Nature had denied him those external gifts to accompany a heart and talents that delighted in the tragic rôle. The manner of him detracted from the poet. We who knew him loved him and exalted him for what he really was."

"He greeted her: 'Courage, my little Julie, courage! *C'est bien,* yes, it is well!' "

"Etienne and Charles reappeared, and the four pro-

ceeded to gather about the meal which the knock had interrupted. The guest explained his appearance:

" '*Hélas,* my friends, all that I do is as good as nothing. I am in double jeopardy, and fled to you, having your letter, Etienne, sent by hand to me some time since. Behold in me a unique; an original; one who as yet has not been copied! For long I have been in peril because I am a Gironde *revolutionist;* to-day I come to you from Strassburg, suspended from my rank, spewed forth by my Gironde brethren, because of the *too revolutionary nature* of my views!

" 'I am in a pitiable state,' " he told them, " 'from the exigencies of flight, the wretchedness of accommodation, and the condition of the roads. Let us set to, *tout à l'heure,* some of all, salad, cheese, bread, wine.' "

"In his own good time," she tells us, "he threw back his head with its flowing, curling locks, and laughed petulantly.

" 'Here's the boiling. A column of volunteers was about to leave Strassburg for the Girondin ranks in Paris. The Girondin ministry and Roland deposed, our armies from the districts are our only hope. I agreed on the eve of their going, to write a song in their honor. Leave us to do in good faith those things that take us by the soul! Yielding to my convictions and my emotions, I wrote the words, and set them to music, at a single sitting!

" 'At the banquet I arose; about me, *le maire,* the citizens, the soldiers; the tricolor everywhere. I looked around on the company, their set faces, their great ardor. Having come thus far along the road of revolution, I asked myself, *shall they not come further?*

" 'Throwing down my challenge, and my defiance, I

poured out my soul in the words I had that day addressed alike to France and to this column of volunteers about to march away to take up arms for her deliverance. I called my song "Chant de l'armes du Rhin." ' "

And here Julie says, "Rouget arose, looking around upon us there at the board; flushed alike with his emotion, and with the good Provençal wine:

" 'Listen, my comrades, my friends; listen, *mignonne* Julie, and say if indeed it is not the song of France? The hymn for all time of the oppressed against the tyrant and the oppressor? My soul flamed as I thought on the wrongs of France, and thus it spoke:

"His voice," she says, "in a clear uplifted tenor, rang forth:

Allons, enfants de la patrie,
Le jour de gloire est arrivé!
Contre nous de la tyrannie
L'étendard sanglant est levé,
L'étendard sanglant est levé!
Entendez-vous dans les campagnes,
Mugir ces féroces soldats?
Ils viennent jusque dans nos bras
Egorger nos fils, nos compagnes

Aux armes, citoyens! formez vos bataillons!
Marchons, marchons!
Qu'un sang impur abreuve nos sillons!

Nous entrerons dans la carrière,
Quand nos aines n'y seront plus,
Nous y trouverons leur poussière
Et la trace de leurs vertus!
Et la trace de leurs vertus!

Bien moins jaloux de leur survivre,
Que de partager leur cercueil,
Nous aurons le sublime orgueil
De les venger ou de les suivre.

Aux armes, citoyens! etc.

As he ceased," she continues, "tears were streaming down his face, and he sank backward into his chair. The three of us for a long moment were silent; then rising, we surrounded and embraced him.

"Etienne spoke: 'Friend of my soul! Comrade! It *is* the song of France, the hymn of the people! And they shall have it!' "

The next day the three young men set to work at the press in the cellar. And straightway the words of fire written by Rouget de l'Isle began to appear on rude handbills, in the cafés of Marseilles, and at the clubs; and for circulation through the villages, and the country around.

The time was ripe. The hour was come. France, awake alike to her peril from foe at home, from *émigré* and foreign intervention abroad, called to her children. Appealed to them for an army of volunteers to support the assembly. Marseilles responded.

The memoir of Etienne speaks now. "Forward ye patriots! The cry comes in the words and writing of Barbaroux, our deputy. 'Send me six hundred men who know how to die; *qui savent mourir!*' "

"Marseilles gets her sons together," so history and the historian better known than Etienne, tells us. "Five hundred and seventeen men, with Captains of fifties and tens; muskets on shoulders, sabers on thighs, with three pieces of cannon. And with these that weapon of the emotions and the loftier passions, the hymn of

Rouget de l'Isle! Dusty of face, this black-browed company, with frugal refreshment, plodding onward; not to be turned aside; three weeks on the journey up to Paris!"

With them went Etienne and Charles Janvier. And with these went also a camp follower; a lad with soft eyes not lacking humor, and slender limbs; one Julie Arnauld Janvier. She tells of it. "It was arranged by my brother that I should go to Soeur Marie Rose, our ancient cousin, superior of the nursing sisters in the old Hotel Dieu, and with her make my asylum until such time as the one or the other, brother or cousin, should return for me. I permitted them to believe that I acquiesced in this arrangement. When I appeared in my boy's disguise, lusty as many among the crowds that everywhere gathered to welcome and even for a time accompany them, near a day's journey from Marseilles, what could they do? How deny my defense? 'Shall I be denied *a free wing,* then, because *I am a woman?* By *you,* the apostles of *freedom?*' " *Les aile des champs,* she puts it. " 'Shall *I* not make history as well as you?' "

LUCY.—So women asked it then, too, Aunt Philippa? It all depends on how we interpret your pretty story, you see.

MOTHER GERTRUDE.—It was July, hot summer weather. She depicts the journeying: "Some wore the red cap of liberty with the tricolor rosette; some a cockaded hat with a feather. Many stuck branches of trees in the barrels of their muskets to shield them from the fierce sun. A banner was at our head which said, 'The RIGHTS of Man.' The drum marked our steps, and we sang as we marched, always the same words, the hymn of Rouget de l'Isle,

Allons, enfants de la patrie——
Aux armes, citoyens!

"And as quickly as the crowds along the way could catch the words, they shouted back:

Aux armes, citoyens!

"To Avignon, to Lyons, past the Rhone we journeyed; many joining us as we went; a chanting host; their blood to be the first of the liberators to pay the price of the liberty they demanded."

A third verse was added to their hymn by these Marseilles Girondins, and was sung first, as the first of them so to die, went their way to the guillotine.

"We reached Paris, and on August 10, led the attack on the Tuileries. September 21, the Girondins, the party of *ideas,* not of political confusion, were out of power.

"That winter to follow, what can I say of this period?" writes Julie. "When no man knew at morning what his fate would be before night! On January 17, the convention decreed the king's death.

"That night the Duc de Chartres sought us in our rooms. For he and my brother again were in conclave. That night he wept; he stormed; pacing the floor. Torn with a thousand violent emotions, the *past* fought within him with the *present!* He called his father, the Duc d'Orleans, traitor and Cain. Again he wept, and called him patriot. Philippe Egalité, his father, that day had voted for the death of his cousin, *the king!* The reign of terror, of confusion was begun."

Mother Mary Gertrude pushed her notes upon the table from her, and turned her regard on Lucy:

"There is not much more to tell. Etienne paid his part of the price of what he believed in. He died on the guillotine in October, 1793.

" 'All Paris is out,' Julie writes concerning this day. 'Such a crowd as even in these days rarely is seen. Bareheaded are the inmates of the carts, hands bound.'

"She, with Charles beside her, presses closer to the wheel of the cart conveying her brother, and, in her lad's clothing, runs beside. She tells us that it was 'a day of delicate drizzle and lowering darkness. My brother spoke to me, who had not seen him since his arrest, six weeks before, looking not at me, but ahead, his words reaching me as I hurried along, one with the press and the mob.'

" 'He mentioned a street, a house. "Our *friend* who is there is supposed to be in safety within the Austrian lines. Aid him to Switzerland, if so be it you and Charles can, where his sister and others await him. You will then put him forever out of your thoughts." '

" 'Etienne, looking ahead, spoke to my cousin at my elbow. "Take her to America, Charles. She has her fortune, of whose disposition you know, and such as remains of mine. Love her and cherish her. And through the children she bears you in the western republic, sons and daughters, see to it that our blood shall *march on, march on,* with *the people!*" '

" 'Ten minutes later,' she writes, 'his head, those eyes humorous yet piercing, that forehead noble and full, that mouth sensitive even in repose, falls into the basket. The eloquent, the young, the beautiful and the brave!'

"It lay within the power of Charles and Julie practically to further the plans of the young Duc d'Orleans

to reach Switzerland, 'where,' she adds, 'under the name of Corby, he set about earning a living for himself, teaching mathematics.'

"She speaks again here of her love for this young man. 'Many enter the temple of love, stay a brief hour and come out, to think they know love. Love is greater than that. Its vigils are long and sorrowful. Its rewards brief—the speaking of soul to soul in the long-held meeting of eyes with eyes; the lingering of fingers within fingers; in handclasps all too brief; the shuddering ecstasy of a final embrace; of lips seeking lips at parting. Gallant, young, tender, beautiful; star of another magnitude for all my prayers and all my hoping; Egalité, my heart's king, and my love! I see, *hélas,* that fraternity and equality, too, have their restricted meanings!'

"Four years later, and for the last time in her life, Julie Janvier again saw Louis Philippe. An exile, he was traveling with his brothers in America. Chatelaine she now was in her husband's home in Kentucky; the mother of his child, my father; the great-great-grandmother of your Stephen to be, Lucy.

" 'He knew my heart,' she writes. 'I had come to see that happiness is ephemeral, but goodness is eternal. Had come to concede that those principles alone shall endure that are of that lofty nature for which we are willing to pay the price. I, who had seen how many young men of France go smiling to their deaths, the price of principle, could do no less. My ultimate sin in the flesh was the kiss that I, of myself, offered to him at parting.' "

* * * * * *

The routine of the schoolday was begun when, the next morning, Lucy came out of her room and sought

Mother Gertrude and Miss Kitty. They looked at her as she came in the sitting room.

"I want to take the next train to town, Aunt Philippa. I'm following Stephen to New York, and I'm asking Kitty here and now to go with me. My idea is, if he still desires it, to marry him before he sails."

She out-flung a protesting hand, she in ordinary a person of few gestures.

"Oh, don't mistake me, either of you. I'm moved by no heroics. As for that, I see that if men can *die* for an idea, a woman is expected to *live* for one! And I see too that woman must decide for herself. Nothing that you can show me will so remain as the terror inspired in me by the picture not alone of your Julie of Marseilles, required to live on without her lover; but the thought of *you* yourself, as you say you have, Aunt Philippa; and of grandmother; and in another sense, of Stephen's own mother! I see nothing in your Julie's story but that her life was cut to its pattern *for* her, not *by* her; by a father, a brother, a lover, a cousin. I see, again, that the thread of her happiness was cut *for* Mrs. Helen Janvier, by another, her husband. I see that grandmother who rebelled, paid nevertheless, even as you paid, too. I shall follow Stephen, and I shall *take* from life such as I *may!*"

CHAPTER XIX

WHEN Lucy arrived at home late that afternoon her tickets were bought, her reservations made, and telegrams sent to Stephen and his mother, and to Warrington Adams. Pausing only to drop her outer coat, and remove her hat, she went to her grandmother's room.

She sat down beside this person, making room for herself on the edge of the ponderous bed. The face of Mrs. Wing looked a thousand years old as it gazed from the pillow searchingly and inquiringly; but a fire yet unquenchable burned in the eyes.

"Grandmother, I'm going to Stephen. Don't, *don't* look at me so! We each have to arrive for ourselves. I don't see it as he does, and likely never shall, but I intend to marry him nevertheless. Grandmother, be *kind;* you've always been kind. Allow that it's my right to decide. Say that since I *have* decided, you agree that I may go!"

"So? Man and his war? They've conquered you too! As with the rest, lover, husband, son, grandson; so now the great-grandchild is taken from me! I've lived bitter and lonely; bitter and lonely, I see, I'm to die!"

Suddenly with this her fury mounted; and thrusting at Lucy as though to have her gone, she began to call for Kitty McKane.

"Is she here? Has she too returned? Send her to me!"

She was groping about her for her cane, which it was her habit and her whim forever to keep near her.

Kitty from her room near by came hurrying in, her hat not yet removed from her blonde head.

A glance by her at Mrs. Wing as she approached, and she issued curt commands to Lucy.

"Go; I ask you to; I promise to call you when I think wiser; go, please; leave her to me."

She even caught Lucy by the shoulder, urging her away.

She heard her go; heard the door close; saw the groping hand of the enraged old woman in the bed, find at last, and seize the cane; saw her raise it, and with a strength born of her fury, lay about her with it, striking blindly in the direction of Kitty.

The fury ebbed, spent by its own violence, and with it sped the cruelly overexcited strength. The panting old creature fell back, face amid the pillows, spent and exhausted; the eyes alone still proclaiming their animosity and rage.

"It's because of women such as you, Kitty McKane, who see man through romance, and because of women such as Philippa Janvier, who see woman through abnegation, that *we* women are where we are! and *Man* in the counsels of the courts of the world still is the *only* and the *final* word!"

* * * * * *

Lucy and Miss Kitty took their train at Ashe the next morning, walking by choice through the woodland and the village to the station.

The matted grass bordering the woodland footpath was beaded with hoar frost. At the bridge some dank

and rotting ferns dripped hoary moisture upon the wet, dead leaves below them. The air was aromatic but cold. Lucy shivered.

They passed out the gateway. The village street ahead looked unreal and unfamiliar.

Lucy saw Mr. Simpson, the butcher, in the doorway of his shop. Lonnie on his bicycle passed her, returning from aiding his brother deliver the morning papers. It occurred to her that she should have telephoned Bennie Harlan and said good-by.

They reached the station. The beech trees which overtopped it were beaded, too, and dripped. Henry and Jerry were here with the bags and the two trunks. The eastbound train came to a halt beside the platform.

A little later Lucy sat staring out on the hurrying landscape of bare cornfields, woodlands, house yards, way stations. Miss Kitty was putting away hats and settling bags and magazines.

Lucy heard herself sigh; a shuddering, terrified sigh. Now that she was here and started, she would have the train make speed. Since she was agreed with herself to take as much of life as offered, she would make passionate haste toward the light before the door should close upon her, and shut her out.

* * * * * *

At noon the next day she followed Miss Kitty through the train shed, a straight young creature in a suit of leaf-brown, furs, and a small, winged hat.

She recognized two faces at the front of the throng beyond the gate, Stephen and Warrington Adams; then saw Helen Janvier and Mr. Stephen Janvier, standing by them.

For Warrington, her long-time friend, it was as if

he were not there. Aware of him, she forgot him.

She had no plans; what Stephen would expect of her she had no idea; when he would sail she did not know; whether, in view of her coming, he would delay his sailing she did not ask. Stepping through the gate and finding him with a stride upon her, she met his eyes, sighed, shivered, and to this extent that she would take what she might, surrendered.

PART II

"Yet in me lies
Part of the future of the race."

CHAPTER XX

LUCY WING JANVIER, twenty-four years old, avidly read the cabled war news as she drank her morning coffee on the porch, the sun playing through the honeysuckle on the silver, glass and china before her. She checked a sob in the midst of a paragraph by Philip Gibbs. She feared and hated him, incomparable war-correspondent, and British master of English; who brought home as no one else, the *mise en scène* of war. Yet she lived from day to day for the papers, which would give her here in Kentucky his latest word from the front; for the racking of her soul, on the principle of tormenting one's own wound.

The German Chancellor's peace offer had reached Washington a week ago. On October 5, five days since, America replied through her president. The cabled letter from Gibbs in Lucy's newspaper of to-day, written in the midst of the scenes it described, and dated October 9, was headed as usual, "At the Front."

The October morning was mild, with a blue haze and a smell of burning leaves, pungent and aromatic. Thomas Harris, knowing her as a father the child, and like a parent occasionally indulging her, this morning placed her breakfast on a silver tray that in its years of usefulness in the household outdated him; and summoning her, served it on the south end of the porch.

She inherited him, as it were, from her grandmother, who was dead these three years; and with him, his wife,

Viola, who was the cook, Ellen Jackson, and Jerry. The four were gray-haired, set in their ways, and not a little tyrannical and trying. But for them, nevertheless, she would be put to it for service; as households were generally.

The hand holding the newspaper fell nerveless to her lap. She oftentimes asked herself if this Philip Gibbs, in the obsession with the thing he and his gifts were at the front for, setting down war in terms that are epic, grasped that it was the wives, mothers, and sweethearts, of the men fighting in the hell he portrayed, who each morning were stretched anew on the crucifix of his words.

Did she say *wives?* She did not know if *she* were wife or widow. Her husband, Stephen, had gone to France in 1915, and for a time had driven an ambulance. Entering a Flying Squadron, it was his idea to be transferred to his own flag when his country came into the war. In twenty months, she had had one official word concerning him, "Missing."

She remembered the day the word came. She did not cry at all, but remained still and motionless; apparently not suffering in the least. Then little by little it came upon her, acute and torturing, clutching her by the heart, and shaking her to and fro. For in her first despair she accepted it that Stephen was dead; and she never would see him again.

She was overwhelmed by terror, not of the pain of the present, nor by that immediately to come; but by the black misery of the future. She was vigorous; she might live to her three score and ten; a feeling of anguish seized her at the thought of these years to be met.

For weeks her grief threw a confused and heavy distress into her brain. The cloud of her apathy then

began to lift, and one day, with no volition of her own, her heart began to beat with an immoderate sudden hope. Stephen was amazingly sound in his headwork. The common sense of the Janviers would save him in any crisis where a cool head and tireless nerve would count. She laughed aloud at this point, rejoicing madly.

Since then she waited with that sense of expectancy which persists so long as there is room for hope at all; a persistency which refused to believe that the worst could be her portion; that, when she awoke each morning, helped her to face the day, and, when she lay down at night, slept with her upon her pillow. Until now every human process in her seemed numb, but the one of waiting.

It was October, 1918. Millions were dead, wounded and missing, since that word coming to her and entering her heart like the fragment of glass which pierced the bosom of the maiden in the old tale, turned her to ice and froze her tears at their source.

She was young to be an ice-maiden; a creature at twenty-four—if indeed Stephen be dead—for whom life henceforth was a shadow, a dream, a mockery of rising and troubling memories. Buoyed up though she was by the sense of waiting, she suffered ceaselessly. She was deep of chest and long of limb, ample if slender of hip; built by nature to be the mother of children. And, oh, God, endowed with the ardent cries, the calls of the body, all the passionate needs of a normal woman for her lover and husband. The scion of a long line of forbears; rich; in herself not meagerly endowed; twenty-four years old; and this her portion, the man she loved *missing!*

She had one child. Little Stephen, this November

just ahead, would be three years old. Her lips hardened. As deliberately as though in the precision of the act she proved herself to her satisfaction, she lifted the squat and round-bodied coffee pot, and refilled her cup.

She did not love her child! She feared love too much to permit herself to love him! Love is agony; love is bondage to a cruel taskmaster; love is a prisoner tortured under whip and chains. These four years since she was twenty had taught her this.

She would not give herself a hostage to fate again through love, this time for her child. Conceived in the anguish of parting from her husband, to whom she had been married those short weeks; carried in the months of mad yearning for him; born at the time the forces in Flanders were being gassed, a departure in warfare new to a horrified world; her husband one of the victims for aught she knew; every step of the way of her motherhood, then and since, had been stations from a Gethsemane of parting to a Golgotha called "Missing."

She dared not allow herself to love the little warm, supine body, laid beside her in the big, square bed in the room upstairs, that November day three years ago. A baby whose mother lay staring at him, mad for him, shaken to her soul by a passion of longing, and not permitting herself to touch him.

Her son was a big boy now, a strapping baby, the servants said; an upstanding little fellow, all gayety, happiness, and busy preoccupation. Quite a little man, he walked prattling beside her about the yard, in the garden, along the footpaths, through the fields. She saw to her farm herself, directing such farm hands as she could hire.

The child as he made the rounds with her chattered of the sky, of the flowers; of the field larks rising with a rush from the clover at his feet; of the minnows darting like gleams of silver about the shady pools and rock bottoms of the creek. Sometimes he would rush ahead of her in pursuit of some winged creature, a moth or butterfly; a joy of being in his every act and movement such as revolted Lucy. Often she experienced so terrible an emotion as to stand helpless, choked; her hand seeking her throat.

Such a love of life and living had marked the older Stephen. Who when he left her, at twenty-seven still was gloriously and outrageously the child and the boy, beneath the exterior of his manhood.

She brought her hand down upon the call bell on the tray; a bell in the quaint semblance of a figure of a crouching wounded Hessian soldier; made from bullion in Lexington, Kentucky, ninety-five years before, for one spendthrift John Henry Wing, by a journeyman silversmith; along with certain other household articles in silver. A Hessian soldier! Symbol alike of a people's hatred, and of two peoples at war! Shall we forever perpetuate these things better forgot!

Her breakfast was within the war-time concessions. In those glad, mad days of Stephen's love-making, he told her with an assumption of much horror, that he suspected her of having an intellect. Whatever intelligence she had she was giving to the finest taut ability in her, to the winning of this war. There was no mandate relating to food, however inconsiderable or however trivial, that she and her household did not obey to the letter.

Thomas appeared. He was spare, with mutton-chop whiskers on his brown cheeks. Soft-footed, deft-fin-

gered, and turned seventy, he began to gather this and that together; doing this with a zeal that lent importance, but not rapidity, to the business. A rite it was, if you looked at it as he meant you should; and each day added to his ritual.

There were days when she hated him. Why should *he* at seventy be serving *her?* Was this feeling with her a consequence of this war, with its upheavals of custom, and its overturnings of values? Had a new and livelier conception of democracy overswept peoples generally?

He wore a white jacket which he exchanged at evenings for a black one. So far as Lucy knew, and it comforted her to recall it, no Wing, even before the ratification of the Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution, had put any human creature into that badge of class and caste, a livery.

She spoke to Thomas here. "While I was dressing I saw from my window, Ellen Jackson and Stephen start out across the yard somewhere. Have they come back?"

"They're coming across the medder-lot now. I saw 'em from the pantry window. They been across fields to the pos' office, to get the mawnin's mail."

Thomas gone, Lucy's gaze went out between the posts of the porch to the foot of the steps, where, with sweet wing-whirr as they descended, half a dozen pigeons were alighting.

In her skirt and blouse, her elbow on the arm of her chair, and her chin in her palm, gazing into the smoke-blue distance of the October landscape as one staring into the future, she looked not at all the girl, but the weary and embittered woman.

The grass of the yard was gone to seed; she and

Jerry were harried as it was, for labor in the fields with the war-time crops. The trees were in the glory of their autumn coloring, the foliage of a black gum blood-red against a spruce. A chestnut dropped slow-circling leaves of gold to mat with the long wet grass at its feet, where a gray-coated squirrel scampered and scolded, as it hunted for the windfalls of the night.

She loved this home. It was antiquated. It lacked every quality of what the world calls smartness. She remembered a speech once on Stephen's lips. "For God's sake, in these peripatetic United States, let us Kentuckians in our homes stay *put!*" Well, she and little Stephen would stay *put.* Her gaze came back from its survey, and her hand closed again on the newspaper in her lap.

With a gesture of bitterness, she relifted it. What had Philip Gibbs and his war news to do here in this scene of serenity, fruition, and content? This garden spot remote from European affairs:

> A few days ago there were heart-rending scenes when 5,000 males between the ages of 14 and 60 were sent away further into the German lines. They were assembled in the chief square where they carried little parcels and handbags, and from their wives and mothers and children there rose loud wailing, and all the men wept as they embraced those who were dear to them, and there was agony of human hearts.
>
> Why write any more? There reaches me the astounding news that Germany has surrendered. If this be true, and I can hardly believe it, because after all these years of war the imagination cannot adapt itself to the belief of such a sudden ending, there will be no need to write any more of these horrors; but

> henceforth there will be the joy of recording the gradual healing of the heart of the world, and getting back to life after all this death, and the memorial of all that heroic youth which has fallen in the gaining of this victory, by which liberty comes to us again, and justice is done.

"Oh, high heaven," she cried, and cast the paper from her. "And what is it that he says so easily? *'Getting back to life after all this death!'* Who are we who've suffered through these things you describe, Philip Gibbs, that you mock us? *'Henceforth there will be the joy of recording the gradual healing of the world.'* Do you think, then, Philip Gibbs, there are not those of us who must weep forever? Do you overlook us because we are not of those you enumerate from whom arose *loud wailing?*"

What was it he said on this same page, concerning the unthinkable things that man can visit upon man? Bearing upon what lay behind the blank wall of this word *missing,* that might be as much worse than death as mercy is removed from pitilessness? She turned to where in the column were set down happenings within certain areas reached by the advancing armies of the Allies, and from which the retiring German forces had retreated:

> I spoke with some young priests who are professors at a college here, and asked them some questions. How had the Germans behaved? What did they think of things?
>
> "Sir," said one of these priests, in good English, "I cannot tell you what we have suffered. I dare not tell you, lest I should break down and weep, which would be bad on this day of joy."

Lucy in her chair was facing the lawn. The screen door behind her opened. Opened so discreetly that she knew it was the hand of Ellen Jackson that did it. There followed an outburst of baby glee in a high and sweet treble, the bang-to of the door, and the flight of small feet across the porch. In the moment of discovering his mother, Stephen had escaped through the doorway, and from Ellen.

Oh, the small warm body flinging itself now upon her, the chubby arms stoutly enfolding what of her they could; the yellow head burrowing, and as it lifted from her shoulder, revealing a flushed and expectant face; the onslaught here of moist and tempestuous kisses, bridging as they were meant by him to do, the separation of the long night between the two; mother and baby son!

She submitted. She always did. Then she freed herself from the caresses she dared not return, and to which she would not yield; notwithstanding they filled her with a terrible and sweet joy because they reawakened in her the sense of motherhood and possession, whose aroused passion she so feared. Alive at the bottom of her chained-up heart was a quivering love and a need for love, and because she knew this she was afraid.

Ellen Jackson detached the child, and set him upon his feet, stooping next to pick up the letters he had cast upon the floor; these being his allotted portion of the mail to carry home from the post office.

At the age of sixty-five, in her black dress and apron, she moved with an upright carriage which few persons younger could match. And she had a tongue, brief and succinct but telling, that when she did speak, never

spared what she blasted with her scorn as "foolishness."

There survived in Lucy a distinct memory of her childhood's awe of Ellen Jackson; whereas little Stephen took her as naturally as he took all things and all people; submitting to her because he had to, and without resentment.

One Mom Belle Preston raised Lucy. Three years ago this person was routed out of her retirement, and forcibly returned to Ashe to assume the care of Stephen. Grown more portly with years, and not a little independent, she limited her walks with him to daily potterings about the grounds, leaving it to the more active Ellen to take him abroad.

Stephen broke away from Ellen now, and raced to the far end of the porch. Having delved into a pile of his playthings lying beneath the hammock swing, he started back, a stick carried upright against his shoulder, and dragging behind him a pasteboard box turned upside down, and attached to a string.

He was a shapely child, clean-limbed and firm-set, his hair which was cropped short, as yellow as daffodils. He fitted chubbily into his clothes, linen knickerbockers, and a tunic blouse of the same white linen, belted. Lucy had debated a long while about the socks. Would Stephen, the sire, have considered them entirely manly? But in the end she gave in to them. He was all but three years old, the functionings of a baby over with, childhood for him begun; and *his father had never seen him!* She, the mother of the missing Stephen's glorious son, could have cursed for its cruelty a man-made world that tolerates war; and gladly died for it, were it impiety.

She took the mail from Ellen's extended hand, but

her gaze was still with her baby son. Suddenly she grasped the nature of his occupation.

The stick against his shoulder, in *his* mind was a *gun*. And his step as near as his feet could compass it, was measured and martial. He marched the length of the porch to Lucy in her chair, and Ellen who stood beside her. Now with the stick against his shoulder, and the measured tread, he was turning.

"What is it you carry against your shoulder, son?"

"Uh gun."

"What is it you are dragging by the string?"

"Uh tank."

She could have groaned.

To her a world at peace was the normal state, and the four years past, the abnormal and monstrous condition. The state natural to her child was war, with its businesses and preoccupations; the condition which his opening faculties finding and fastening on, was accepting as the normal one.

Did he go to town, sitting beside her in the car, or more often beside Henry, the chauffeur, he saw the soldier in khaki, and his officers, everywhere; giving character to the streets, filling the trolley cars, getting in and out of official motor cars. The city was the site of a cantonment whose quota was forty thousand men.

During the summer past, he went to the village day after day, to stand on the platform of the station with a hand in Jerry's brown one, to see the troop trains go by; a bevy of soldier faces at each window of every crowded coach, boys harking from every state in the union, youthful and grinning.

If Mom Belle Preston took him to Sunday school, across the road, he saw flags; heard martial hymns;

and listened to the war talk of the other children.

Every mail brought magazines and illustrated papers. As Mom Belle in her starchy dress and white apron turned the pages of these for Stephen's amusement, her spectacles resting afar down on her great nose for her own accommodation, they looked, these two, the child of sixty-eight, and the child of three, speculating as they gazed, on every pictured condition, creature, and engine of war, that could pass the censor. If it be true that the background for life is fixed for the individual in the formative years of his early childhood, then little Stephen Janvier was a war baby indeed.

Lucy's eyes followed the white-clad little figure, now almost at the far end of the porch again. She turned to the erect figure beside her. Her voice had a sudden strange, almost an awed inflection.

"Ellen, do you realize that *I,* too, virtually never knew *my* father?"

Ellen too had been following the child with her glance. She moved here, coming a step forward, and showing animation. Her erect person straightened. Her voice that ordinarily was curt and brief, took on the level tenseness of the narrator who sees as well as recalls. The *past* was *hers;* she was in it, and of it.

"I was on this porch with you, a little toddling thing, a little older than Stephen here, but not yet allowed at the table with the grown folks. It was such another day as this, mild an' warm, though it was later in the fall, being November. I took the telegram myself from Alonzo Simpson's brother; him who was station agent then; an' carried it to ol' Miss, who was at the breakfast table. She opened it, an' read it through.

She never cried out; nothing like that; it wasn't her way. Turning, she said to me:

" 'My grandson, Mr. John Henry, is dead at Tampa, Florida, of typhoid fever and Chicago packer's rotten meat. They might have given me notice that he was ill, and at least the chance of getting to him.'

"Quick, like ol' Miss always was, she begun to give her orders, directing Tom that the carriage go for Dr. Westcott; and the Jersey wagon fetch Belle Preston, who was home takin' a week's rest before the fracas came, which was due with your ma any day.

"Then she came out from the dining room to the hall, me following, and begun to mount the steps to Miss Selina, your ma, standing at the head of the stairs, and calling. She had seen Johnny Simpson from her window, coming with the yellow envelope in his hand, and had sensed it. There wasn't any keeping the truth from her after that. The baby come the next day; an' both of 'em, mother an' child, dead the day next to that."

"Ellen," Lucy's voice again was awed; "have you thought about this, too? My father, who was twenty-six when he died, could not remember *his father?*"

"His pa was killed at Chickamauga, in '63. I was a gal, training to be allowed to come into the house as a house servant, but I remember about that too, the same as if it was yesterday. Little Mr. John Henry, your daddy, was three months old. He an' his ma, Miss Jinny, as we called her, was here with Mrs. Wing till the war should be over, an' the men folks get home. When Mr. John Henry's young pa come home, it was in what the sol'yers in them days called a wooden overcoat. But he come. His ma, Mrs. Wing, had her mind made up that he was going to be buried where

she wanted him. She went herself and brought him home and put him away."

"Ellen, do we only take breath, that the new generation may reach manhood, to go to war again? The heart of what woman, probably not yet born, is to break when my baby Stephen's time comes? And what nation's young men, now in their swaddling clothes, will be the enemy then?"

The letters in Lucy's lap slid to the floor. As Ellen replaced them, one with a bold, firm superscription, came uppermost. Lucy gave a cry, and caught it up.

"Ellen, Ellen, how did I fail to see it was here? Take Stephen to Mom Belle, please, she by this time must be through her breakfast. If it should be news! It is from Warrington Adams, Ellen, and it is the second from him in a week!"

She was alive enough now, alive and erect, opening the oblong envelope with passionate eagerness, trembling with emotion, with anguish, she knew not with what contending, distracted feelings. She was not conscious when the two went, reëntering the house as they had come, through the screened front doorway. Her eyes ran down the page. Ah, here, here, at last it began to be pertinent:

. . . as I promised you, Lucy, I am seeing every man it is humanly possible to get at, who returns to New York from the front, certainly every newspaper man. The members of our own overseas staff have instructions since I wrote you five days ago to keep ears and eyes wide for any word or clew brought out of the retaken country, by any released civilian or escaped prisoner. If Stephen is alive, in or out of Germany, you and I will find him.

But do you really feel, dear, that you have to urge me to new efforts? Even by so sweet a tribute as your last letter

conveys, with its reference to what you generously call my "genius for friendship."

Not even for your dear sake will I allow that I need any urging. When two decent young men for their four years at college are roommates, men so different that the attraction is the stronger, not even Stephen's wife may think she can urge Stephen's friend to effort.

If this matter of an armistice comes to pass—and we are come now, you and I, to the occasion for this letter—I plan to go over at once. A Gilbert to his Richard, I'll sing my chant through every repatriation camp in Germany, but I'll find some clew. For me to have tried to get over sooner, though I do not say I have not done so, would have gained me only the prompt denial of official impatience.

Because of the abundance of your woman's tenderness, which is another way of saying your intuitive comprehension, I have not felt it needful to touch before on my so evident handicap, the obvious explanation of so many things; for one, my being here at a desk in a newspaper office during the four years of the war.

And now a word to tell you what's doing in the greatest little village on earth. The home town of the only bronze Liberty Girl on the map is preparing for the fourth Liberty Loan drive. You know how we do things here when we start. As for the big news of the day, the possibility of an armistice, I would say New York is afraid to let herself stop and consider if there's anything in it, because of her fear that behind it may be somebody's botching, and her feeling that the Boche is not beaten yet to the point he needs to be. But when we consider what a cessation in hostilities will mean in lives saved. . . .

The page fluttered from Lucy's hand. She was crying; two great tears rolling from the corners of her eyes down her thin cheeks; she who said her heart was ice, and her tears frozen at their source.

Stephen accused her in the days of their courtship

of being a proud woman, taking too great comfort in her self-reliance and her independence, and caring nothing for the coöperation with herself of others. And it was true enough until as it happened, she fell in love with him; the astounding sovereign strength of love sweeping aside the prides of all baser stamps.

Warrington, his friend and hers, who had done so much, who had the insight to know what there was that could be done, leaving Stephen's uncle, man of affairs as he was, to waste time and impotent rage at Washington; Warrington to the end would do all that could be done; and she, now become so humble, so willing, with gratitude would let him.

It had been a weary time after Stephen left her. For nine months she carried her child; for eight months to follow she nursed him at her breast. At no time could she leave her grandmother, by then bedridden, and who when little Stephen was four months old, died. She could make no plans in those first months to go across to Stephen; as she might have done. He was an American wearing the uniform of a country other than his own. During this time his plans by which he might come to her and return, failed successively. After which it was too late.

Why should New York seem so much closer to Stephen and the chance of finding him, if he be alive? Closer than her own Kentucky? These last months of praying for some word out of silence, more than once she hurried east, dropping everything, all the sedatives of war-work through which she tried to dull the sleepless gnawing at her heart and brain, there to listen to the pulse of the great city beating to a tenseness as never before; until a sudden mental and physical repletion of sensation and emotion sent her home.

She closed her eyes; seeming to perceive too sharply the dreadful misery of life. She knew that for her, be Stephen dead or alive, there was no one in the world forever nearer, dearer, and more importunate. He was her grief, her joy, her happiness, and she panted and longed for him. He filled her whole life. It was inconceivable that he and she should be forced by fate to live their lives apart.

She arose from her chair abruptly. Entering the doorway, she passed along the hall, reached and lifted the stable telephone.

"Henry?"

Henry Oliver, approaching fifty, was the nearest to anything young on the place. His voice, which was chipper, human, and cheerful, answered the call.

"Yes'm, Miss Loocy."

"I want you and the car directly after lunch. I have to run into town. I'm going to New York to-morrow."

Then she remembered Philip Gibbs and went back to the porch with its outlook on a multicolored autumn world, to get him. As he followed the conquering armies of the allies into the retaken villages and towns, in the paths of released and returning prisoners, every word from him held possibilities for her. She recovered the paper, and found the paragraph picturing the retreat of the enemy:

> Before he is ready to leave our men are on his heels. Our horse artillery is firing along his tracks before he can escape with his heavy loads. His rear guards are captured before the main body is out of danger.
>
> It is very slow, this pursuit, when seen from our side of things, but as quick as hurrying death to masses of German soldiers.

"As quick as hurrying death!" She was obsessed by the thought that sooner or later out of this retreat; from some of these retaken towns or villages, some word might come for her. And wild as the hope was, and small as were the chances, she knew that she was hurrying to New York and to Warrington Adams to tell him so.

* * * * * *

CHAPTER XXI

LUCY and Henry left the house grounds behind them, and came in sight of the entrance gate. She wore a black suit, a white blouse and a black hat.

"Now that I think of it, stop at the butcher shop, Henry; I want to speak to Mr. Simpson."

The car sped toward the village between the rows of black ash trees that met above the road.

Rural central Kentucky, a diversified region, pastoral and agricultural, fertile and prolific, dotted with thickets and little woods, and watered by creeks and by springs feeding slender watercourses, has an actual, a sensuous charm for the beholder. Lucy loved the countryside around Ashe with a physical passion.

She had spent her early life out of doors, years strenuous and tireless, climbing the hillsides, scaling walls and rail fences, clambering over the rocky bed of the creek. Later she raced the pikes on Powhatan, her small and tough Indian pony, bending over the little roan's neck, his short, gleaming mane whipping her face, her black hair flying, urging him onward with all the power of her own youthful body.

She knew for miles around, every hill, upland, lowland and bottom; every watercourse, old mill pond, and still pool; knew the fields and pastures where the first mushrooms pushed through, dank with the dew, and shining white in the morning sun amid the cropped

green. She knew each foot of uncleared woods and forest surviving, and passionately loved them; the haunts as these were in spring of maidenhair, the waxy Indian pipe, trillium, starry campion, bloodroot, the adder's tongue; and in the fall of the year as now, of the scarlet-beaded jack-in-the-pulpit, the mauve-pink wahoo, the black fox grape, and—almost vanished with the vanishing forests—the fleshy golden pawpaw. She knew every farmhouse and hamlet, every nature of soil and the resulting crops; knew the phases of the succeeding seasons.

To-day the blackbirds were gathering, lifting and falling, settling in the tops of the overhead ashs in black multitudes, to rise a moment after, the air above the purring of the car filled with the rushing of their wings, together with their raucous cries.

She remembered autumns when the branches of the pines near her own house snapped beneath their weight; when Jerry's shotgun proved inadequate either to dislodge them or intimidate them, so incredible was the black host; and the farm hands had to be summoned. And she recalled her grandmother saying that in her childhood, it was the passenger pigeons in their annual passings, that broke the forests here in Kentucky under their weight.

The car turned and stopped before the little brick shop, squat and square. Mr. Simpson, as was his way with his friends, came out, squat of build himself, and dumpy as well and bald, in a white apron and his shirt-sleeves. The steel-framed spectacles worn a little far down on the pudgy nose, out of the way of the mild glance, suggested rather the artisan, cabinetmaker or shoemaker; but not a butcher. The eyes pale blue be-

hind scant flaxen lashes, sought the face of Lucy, who leaned toward him from the car.

"An' what can I do for you to-day, Miss Lucy?"

"How are you, Mr. Simpson? You are to decide for me, if my corn is more needed by the food administration *as corn,* or *as lard and bacon on the hoof.* I have thirty-seven piggies in the woodland lot. They must begin on the corn or go. I leave the responsibility with you. I'm off for the east to-morrow."

"One minute, Miss Lucy. I'll keep the matter on my mind, an' see Jerry about it the next day or two. A minute befo'h you go, please, about a matter of my own."

Mr. Simpson, bothered little man, born and bred on a small farm just outside the limits of Ashe, was appealing in his worried way. The obligation would have been the same with Lucy if he were not. He and she were of the old-timers; the old stock; scions of the original settlers hereabouts, and bound to stand together.

He blinked as he looked up at her, the afternoon sun being in his face, the kindest little man in half a dozen counties. "I'd like to have you take a look at some'n, befo'h you get away."

He trotted back across the flagstones at this. Lucy saw him through the glass front of his show window, take something down from the wall from beneath the big round clock behind the meat-block. As he came again to the curb, he handed her a newspaper cut of Lonnie, his son, with a fetching grin and smartly spruced hair, in ill-fitting khaki.

"I cut that picter outer Lonnie's evening paper, the one he delivered round here for four years, taking the

job when Bennie Harlan, preacher's boy, give it up. It's going to please him over there in that Archangel, in Russia, to know his picter come out in his own paper."

The little man's face grew hard. Its appeal vanished, and in the pale mild eyes appeared a glint. "They're tellin' me, Miss Lucy, the president's goin' to give them Germans *peace!* Why, *their* cities an' towns ain't touched yet, *their* grain is bein' harvested right along in their fields, *their* cows are standin' in their comfortable stalls, nobody ain't set no axe to *their* orchard trees!"

* * * * * *

The car left the curb. Truly, thought Lucy, the greater part of the world has drawn together in four years. It needs no covenants, no courts of arbitration, no machinery of governments, to bring peoples together. A common calamity had done this. Setting up in minds that had no thoughts at all on such subjects before, concepts of new and far horizons. The little butcher was following the world's news avidly. News that created partitions in a mind that knew nothing of such partitions before; that bred hatreds however justifiable, in a creature unvisited by such hate before. War can do this; war does do this; war through its very needs *must* do this!

The car retraced its way beneath the ash trees and the blackbirds with their raucous creakings. It approached Lucy's own gateway on the one hand, and the steps set in the bank leading to the parsonage on the other.

'Genie Harrison at this moment was unlatching the gate which opened on these steps. She waved a hand, and the car slowed down.

"Lucy, darling!"

Her chic suit, and her hat that matched, were subdued, that is to say, they were subdued for her; the skirt being no shorter than the merely *average* daring person would venture it. Recalling the extremes to which she carried all vogues in the past, one felt she would have subdued her hair also, which was auburn and gleaming and abounding, if nature would have shown her how. The car stopped as she reached the last step.

"Thank you. Let me get in. If you're starting for the city ask me to go with you; you know how I hate the trolley."

She settled herself beside Lucy. Her eyes were set wide apart so that the outer edges of the lids seemed to be one with the curves of the temples, giving her an amazing open gaze. She had a childlike person, a small, undeveloped bosom and thin shoulders.

"How well you look in your black, Lucy."

She sighed profoundly, her eyes still surveying Lucy. "You've been wearing it, of course, ever since Mrs. Wing went; but think of the *comfort* it must be to you now! My family won't let me have it; father won't consider it. But, oh, Lucy, if I had married Bennie before he went across, I could wear it in *spite* of 'em; and I do want mourning——"

She dabbed her eyes with a little ball of handkerchief. "And I *would* have married him. It wasn't I that was backward! Damn a world of false values; he'd been raised in a damnable school of life that persuaded him it was manly to decry himself because my people had disgracefully overmuch, and he was poor!"

She was crying openly now. Poor little dancer, her wings pierced by that bit of German shell! New to

love, the soul's tenderest grace of all, its wakened desires now hopeless, hers was grief not two months old, bleeding and raw; and astounding in its insistence to her who until now, knew nothing of abnegation, or self-discipline; casual and indiscriminate in her past love affairs as the wind that up-flings all leaves alike in its path, she still was astonished at what had happened to her, and resentful of her predicament.

"Bennie was an *absurd* sort, wasn't he, with his habit of exaggerated *understatement,* as I heard some one put it? He told me that you played dolls with *him;* and he played Injuns with *you.* I asked him which he liked best. 'Dolls,' he said; 'gettin' 'em to bed with *measles;* when I wasn't shooting craps with Julius Buck and William Coffin behind the church!' "

Lucy moved. " 'Genie, *don't!* As you suggest, *I* grew up with him."

The car bowled along the pike leading to the city. 'Genie's red lips were parted over her white teeth, which were small and even; lending her face an air of breathless, even panting expectancy, the same look, indeed, as distinguished little Stephen Janvier when he pursued his winged creatures, moth or butterfly.

"I hate days as beautiful as *this* one. I hate that field of tall corn shocks; I hate its blue *shadows,* and its orange *pumpkins.* I hate this *woodland* here on this side, and the sheep *dotting* it. I suppose because they're beautiful too, in *their* ways. Why *mustn't* I talk about Bennie? What else is there I can so *want* to talk about?"

She looked at Lucy resentfully, and in a way furtively, her eyes hot with a certain reproach. Lucy, aware of what was coming, looked icily ahead. Side by side on the leather cushions of the car, these two

bereft young creatures, their spirits suffused each with its own sufferings, which in the case of 'Genie were as bodily hunger is to a child; never were women under similar griefs, more dissimilar; a poppy tossing in the flaying storm the one, lashed and beaten; milk-white phlox the other, erect in the successive flashes of the lightning, and stiffly pale.

'Genie's cry was vivid as color, and quivering. "*You* married Stephen; you had those *weeks* with the man you love before he left. And you have *more*." Her voice at its best was husky, always a surprise since it did not match her person. It here sank hoarsely, though it is doubtful if she herself could have said why; then broke on a sob. "You have his and your *child!*"

Lucy refusing to reply, as before they sat side by side. Their faces, haunted according to each nature by the melancholy of those who remember, looked ahead at the road unwinding. The car swerved to avoid a truck marked Q.M.D., U.S.A., driven by two soldiers in khaki, and piled high with barreled potatoes; followed by another; and another. The truck farms through this immediate section constitute one of the potato markets of the world, and the supply department of the great camp, six miles across country, benefited by its proximity.

Again the car swerved, this time to avoid a cow with a young calf at her side, driven along the road by a quite small boy, the scene bucolic, and in keeping with the surroundings. Each time the car swung out of its course, the sun with something of the heat of a summer day fell across the faces and the persons of the two young women on the back seat.

"Lucy," the husky voice now was piteous; "he wrote

his father that a Tommy over there looked him up and down—Bennie was some gangly and *some* tall, *wasn't* he?—and asked him how it *felt* to have length and position and no *breadth?*"

Again she was motionless, held by her trouble, a suffering which was of the flesh perhaps, but which was deep, which indeed was *bigger than 'Genie,* so that as yet she did not know how to adjust herself to it, and take up her load.

They were come now to the outskirts of the park marking one of the boundaries of the city, a region of modern houses, large grounds and costly shrubberies. The car turned in at a gateway, swept about a drive flanked by clipped lawns, and stopped before 'Genie's house. A bright gold light from the mid-afternoon sun shimmered through the tops of some young trees. There was a smell of autumn in the air.

'Genie turned suddenly and kissed Lucy passionately, throwing her arms about her, arms that were thin and small as those of a child. Her childish shoulders, thin within the chic jacket, shivered as with cold. It was with relief that Lucy saw her go.

CHAPTER XXII

LUCY, arrived at her mother-in-law's house, nodded to the maid who admitted her. She followed her through the parlor to the library beyond. Helen, who was expecting her, came to meet her, hands extended. As did the Roman matrons of an earlier republic, she suggested always a great lady, with her firm nostrils, sweet and rather wide mouth, and her eyes of an indefinable blue-gray set a trifle close together.

"Mother!"

The two women came together with this cry from the younger, Lucy yielding for the moment, and letting her head sink on Helen's shoulder. Then she got herself together.

"Mother, the horror and the restlessness are here again. Kitty can't do what I ask her; I've talked with her at the camp over the 'phone. She can't leave her canteen work. If I run away one time more, will you stay with little Stephen? I mean will you go out to him? There's too much flu in town, you see."

Helen loosened the silk scarf about Lucy's throat. "If you feel it's better for you to get away again, why, it will be. You know I'll stay with Stephen. You know all I want is to be asked to stay with him. You hardly grasp yet, I suspect, that to me he's my only child's *child*. It won't do at all to bring him to town."

Lucy nodded. Her dark eyes regardfully were sweeping the other woman up and down.

"You're pale." She spoke accusingly. "You're tired; you're no more immune than the others of us women made to suffer through no act, nor any choice of our own."

She removed her gloves, and threw down her hand bag. "You've been out at the camp all day, I suppose, nursing influenza drafted-boys, in your mask and gown? You've a pact with yourself, I believe, to forget, through perpetual physical exhaustion!"

"Let's keep sensible, Lucy. Our respect for one another, mother-in-law and daughter-in-law, I do believe, began in the fact that we're neither of us sentimental in our attitudes to life. If I've been out at camp, one of many women doing what the novice can in an emergency, it's because I want to be; don't overlook that. I have a cup of tea always when I get home. Here it comes, let's enjoy it."

"Mother?"

"Yes?"

These two women adored one another. They understood each other very well. Theirs was the antithesis of the accepted relation between the mother and the wife of a man.

"I wasn't honest just now. Of course little Stephen can't come to town, but back of my asking you to go to Ashe is another reason. I'm willing to trust only you, or Kitty, if there should come a telephone call for me like the first."

She drew a letter from her bag, and threw it on the table. "It's from Warrington. On the strength of my faith based on that first telephone message, I'm letting him go over to search for Stephen. You've not de-

ceived me, you and Uncle Stephen? You've not agreed as to the chance of its being dependable, merely to satisfy me?"

Helen, who was pouring the tea, set the teapot down. Without any warning she felt suddenly weak. More than her own grief, which was very great, it was the suffering of Lucy that was breaking her heart. Grief that the girl was so cheated of the rights and the demands of her youth; grief that the cup was put thus early to one so young. She wept for her in the night, calling her with sincerity, her darling.

Some two months after Stephen was reported missing, Lucy was called to the telephone. The unfamiliar voice of a boy, now husky, now treble, spoke. An old-young timid voice, Lucy said it was, painstaking and anxious.

"Is this the *young* Mrs. Stephen Janvier? Have I got the right place? I want to be certain it's the *young* Mrs. Stephen Janvier?"

She reassured him. "Who is it speaking to me, please?"

"I can't say. I haven't the letter with me, but it said to tell you that your husband's a prisoner in Germany. You'll please not try to find who's speaking. It'll only make trouble if you——"

According to Lucy the telephone here clicked as the receiver at the other end was hung up.

* * * * * *

Helen spoke reluctantly. "You weren't wrong in the least to lay stress on it. We all did. Your Uncle Stephen and the secret service left no effort untried to trace it beyond that booth in the drug store. We did not dare not believe in it."

"You still believe Stephen's alive?"

There was silence. Helen's head had bowed itself, her face in her hands.

"You believe he's dead. Why?"

She had approached Helen, and pushed an ottoman beside her. Her face was bloodless, and she paused as she put the question.

"His Uncle Stephen says we must have heard something otherwise before now. That with every facility for the relief of prisoners at work through Washington, and through Switzerland, he must have been located. I'm teaching myself to accept it; to admit it."

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By and by the girl up-lifted her head from the other's lap. "I think what ails me, and brings on the brain-storms, is trying to reconcile a secondary state of mind that I've built up as a duty with the original mind with its bone-deep horror, not of this war, but of *war!* Endeavoring to live up to the war-self that I've put on, like the masks worn by the actors in the Greek plays! You knew grandmother; you can say if this hatred of war is engendered in me, or implanted."

She got up and went back to a seat on the couch. "Sometimes I think my attitude toward the whole machinery of the present war is only my inherited share of my pioneer forbears' blunt common sense. Horse sense. I get overwhelmed with the stupidities of the things I see around me as part of war's conditions; outraged with the inconsistencies. Take the flu at our camp. Boys out there are lying on cots without sheets or pillows. Some have died in their heavy clothes because there's no one to put them comfy in hospital nighties. Before we younger women, and we women with young children, were rejected as aids, I saw these things for myself; and it was only last week they were

standing in lines of one to two hundred, in the corridors of the base hospital, waiting to be officially admitted, often with temperatures of 104 and more. Dazed, nauseated, stupefied, homesick; lying on the floors of the hallways even, pending attention. I know these things, and so do you. One overworked orderly, and often no nurse at all, to a ward of fifty ill and often dying boys! And yet because it's *war*, and military regulations in their nature are illogical and stupid things, these boys, sick or well, can't go home to be nursed, or to escape infection. *And their mothers, arriving in the city by every train, are not allowed to go and nurse them!* I challenge God's doomsday book at the day of reckoning, to say if red tape, the red tape of bureaucracy and regulations, hasn't brought about as many deaths in this war as the Boche himself."

She began to walk about. "And if I apply its outrages individually, eliminating Stephen as a factor; looking at myself as one of many thousands of young girls and young women affected the world over, what has this war done for me? The four years that normally should have been the happiest in my life, the still formative years of a girl just grown, have been what? Have been such, apart from the personal griefs, that I would gladly die, so do I hate man and his institutions and his governments."

"Lucy, dear!"

"Defend these things then, if you can? Convince me that I'm wrong?"

"I don't defend them. I didn't try to defend them when my boy, eleven years old, lost his father in the Cuban war. Perhaps I am too easily pacified, too quickly silenced by the excuses of life. My claims doubtless are too soon withdrawn. Mine probably

is the resignation of the passive, the less complex creature. I am very, very simple, you know, Lucy!" Helen spoke even piteously, as one apologizing.

"I know that I often suspect you of being an angel, and know myself to be very much the reverse."

Lucy had gone now to the fireplace, and as she talked, stood looking at a sketch of Stephen at twelve years; a slight thing done in red chalk, of a boy in a jacket, wearing a round white collar, and a windsor tie. She gave a quick, sharp exclamation, full of anguish and bitterness.

"You and I who suffer through no fault of our own, are *women.* The ones you and I and other women mourn, are *young* men. Has it occurred to you that while it's men who bring about *war,* it's invariably *old* men? Busybody Poloniuses; and seemingly benignant Nestors? Did Germany, did France, or England, or America, did Austria, Russia, or Italy, give youth one representative in their determining councils? Had youth a voice in these issues anywhere that you've heard of? It's the impertinence of the thing, and the outrage. *The wars only for which young men, a group class, have been responsible, are the revolutions by which the world has been moved forward, and the iniquitous systems of the old men have been overthrown.*"

"Lucy, dear, the father of your child *volunteered;* he chose of himself to fight in this war."

"And I too am fighting in it, heart, hands and fortune, as far as a woman may. You know if I've shirked. But in my soul *I know I'm playing a part,* and I'm embarrassed in doing it. Stephen saw it in his way; we won't go into that. With us *younger* people in America, however, I think it's been a case of nation-wide embarrassment. Oh, I do. Not that it

didn't have to come. And not that we didn't see it had to be done even before we came into it."

She came back to Helen. "It's this way. We younger Americans had moved past the mental attitude necessary for war. We'd come to see the absurdity of men killing men; it didn't look sensible; the idea seemed comical; as a proposition it didn't seem to us to hold water; points of view which, as Bennie Harlan said, got next to us more than the mere wickedness of it. The America that Bennie and I stood for, and I believe we are typical, had to educate itself *back* to a point of view that could and would consider war."

She picked up a paper cutter, and fingered it. "It's a curious thing to look back on, the young people of a nation, and I was one of them, shrinking from reëntering the corpse of an old and repudiated, an abhorrent state of mind. That's why we *young* people weren't startled or shocked, when the president said America was *too proud to fight.* Some of us sidestepped, shied off a bit at the word *proud,* afraid it sounded too much like rhetoric, Bennie, for example. But it didn't shock us one little bit; we knew exactly what he meant. It was the older minds that were shocked. I think there's something heartening rather than disconcerting about us younger ones in this. It makes it much more wonderful what we've compelled ourselves to do."

She flung the paper cutter down. "But we'll *never forgive you!* My *world* will never forgive *your world,* that forced us to take up the obsolete weapons of brute force *we* despise. God knows how we wince, we young people; 'Genie and I, for example, when we go to see Dr. Harlan and Mrs. Harlan. Truth itself is subject to war! They see Bennie as one of the shining hosts of good, battling with Christ as leader, for dominion

in the skies. 'Genie and I see him the victim of a civilization that stands confessed a failure. I must call up Uncle Stephen, and ask if he can let me have some money for my ticket and such. It's too late to get it any other way."

* * * * * *

After Lucy was gone Helen sat and yearned for her. Spirited, impatient, bred to form like the thoroughbred of her own state, indeed not unlike some quivering highly strung young filly, the heart of the older twice-bereaved woman, bled for the younger. Again a wave of great weariness came over her. It seemed to her all at once that life asked too much of her, and she no longer knew how to meet it.

* * * * * *

It was past ten o'clock. Lucy's trunk was gone downstairs, packed as always by Ellen Jackson's unhurried and careful hands. Ellen's own trunk was ready. As she in the past went with Mrs. Wing, so she now went with the granddaughter.

Lucy was in her bedroom; with a negligée wrapped about her gown, she sat before a handful of wood fire that blazed fitfully on the hearth. Little Stephen was asleep in his room adjoining; Mom Belle was in the room next that.

She gazed at the old wooden mantel, an Adam's model, painted white, her brows indrawn with a frown. It was placed here when the house was built and like much else in the old interior, she suspected it in its execution, was very bad. But not for that did she frown. The side panels were elaborate with scrolls, garlands and crossed swords. The central panel beneath the outstretched wings of a screaming

eagle, commemorated the battle of New Orleans; the backwoodsmen from Kentucky, the heroes of that occasion, crudely depicted in their hunting shirts and caps of coonskin, with their long squirrel rifles resting on a breastwork of cotton bales. Lucy had occupied this room all her life. Remembering how she as a child had gazed at this paneling, pondering and speculating over its every depicted feature, it angered her to realize that the human mind from its earliest consciousness, is made to glorify war. It aroused a deeper anger in her that the hearthstone of the home should convey the lesson.

The telephone on the table at the head of the bed rang sharply. It could be any one of half a dozen reasonable calls; it might be Helen Janvier speaking from the city; it could be the Harlans across the road; or 'Genie; but it did not suggest itself so to Lucy. She knew in fact that it was none of these, though she could not have said why.

Rising to answer the call, her hand sought her throat, and she began to tremble. The distance she must go from hearth to bed seemed vast; her feet in their mules stumbled; though in truth the bell had not stopped ringing when she got to the receiver.

She knew what the voice would be that would speak to her; what its timbre; its intonation; the voice, husky changing to treble, of a boy; an anxious voice; hurried and stumbling:

"Is this Mrs. Stephen Janvier?"

"It's Mrs. Janvier speaking. Oh, tell me; won't you tell me, who you are? And why you're speaking to me again after so long?"

"I had to come without *this* letter, too, and tell you

what I can remember of it. Some men escaped out of Germany from the prison-camp at—wait—I wrote *that* down——"

The voice began again: "I'll spell it. T-e-r-m-o-n-d-e. Some men escaped from that place have word for you. They planned to come out by way of Ghent. The letter came yesterday." The telephone clicked as the receiver was hung up.

CHAPTER XXIII

THE next day as Lucy sped east with Ellen Jackson she looked back to the moment when, the message over the telephone abruptly ended, she hung up the receiver.

She remembered as her first act that she laughed aloud, rejoicing madly. She had not questioned the source of her information, nor its reliability; the fashion in which the message came to her had not bothered her. She was conscious only that the gates of life had opened for her a little way, and the silence had spoken.

Standing there in her room, she babbled; she knew now it was that; telling herself she must speak to Mr. Stephen Janvier; or first must talk with Stephen's mother; that she must send a night letter following her day message to Warrington Adams, postponing her arrival in New York by twenty-four hours; giving herself time for a family council and discussion.

She did none of these things until later. Instead she fled into the adjoining room, flashed on the shaded night light, and flung herself on her knees beside her son in his small white bed.

She was weeping as she did so. Her shoulders were shaken by the force of her great sobs. Whereupon Stephen awoke, great, splendid baby, sitting up suddenly, flushed and heavy; looked at her with dilated frightened eyes, and began to wail.

She rose from her knees at this, and sat beside him on the bed; took him in her arms and gathered him close, a thing she so rarely permitted herself to do, crooning to him madly yet softly, with a rocking motion of her body, laughing and crying weakly between her reassuring words, now and again pressing her lips to his hair, his soft, small neck, his clinging hands.

"There, there, there, little son; see now, see now ——"

* * * * * *

To-day on the speeding train, she wondered at herself as she looked back; that she considered delaying her journey; or went so frankly mad with her joy.

She had spoken to Mr. Stephen Janvier over the telephone a little later, and he hearing her story had brought her promptly to earth; all too quickly pricking the mounting bubble of her too great elation.

He would not say the information might not prove true. But the months elapsed since the first message had furnished no evidence to verify the truth of its statements; and he begged her not to place too much hope on this one.

He attributed it, as he did the first message, to some German family in the community, well-disposed and believing what they told her, since it was impossible to think that any one, alien or foe, would purposely mislead her. They were unwilling to disclose themselves and their identity, since they in that event must also disclose the source of their information, and the manner of its reaching them; a matter liable to lay them open to suspicion or worse.

So he reasoned. And to-day Lucy sat and gazed out the car window, sad; the more distraught because of the moment's wild hoping; watching the country and

the passing farmhouses and hamlets with their long shadows, mellow in the slanting golden light; for it was late afternoon, and she and Ellen Jackson had boarded their sleeper at noon.

Where then, living or dead, was Stephen? Was she ever to know? Life is a long road to travel at twenty-four, with a load of uncertainty such as this forever with her.

Why was he given to her to be taken away? She had not asked life for passion. Love and passion had been thrust upon her before she was ready for them, unwelcome gifts forced into her unwilling keeping.

She was staring out the window still, when the empurpled sun disappeared behind the foothills, now left behind by the climbing train that all night would be panting through the mountains ahead; was staring still when she saw the moon come up above the stony valley they traversed, where a roaring river tore over enormous rocks; the moon which these days rose for her only to sorrowful brightness.

The train swerved, the moon disappeared, and she staring at the night only, shivered. The wheels rattled; the shrieking wail of the whistle came back with melancholy cadence from the hills; the train roared as it rushed across a bridge. Her heart was seized by terror and despair. She feared nature; this nature that she gazed on; that exists, it seemed to her, to bring to nothing that she has created. A sense of the nothingness of life overcame her; its futility overwhelmed her.

* * * * * *

War conditions did not make travel easy for the civilian traveler, and the coach was crowded. Khaki prevailed, worn in the main by young, or this-side mid-

dle-age, men with shoulder straps. One heard the murmur of their voices above the noise of the train, conversing one with another. There were two clear-eyed boys, their blonde hair roached, their cheeks rosy, in sailor clothes.

Ellen Jackson, alert and alive in her decent black dress and black hat, sat facing Lucy. She was cheerful when she traveled.

A *jandered* nature ordinarily, so her kin said of her, change and variety enlivened her. The fact that luxury in war time is taboo, was a novelty.

"I've been sitting here asking myself how many times I've come and went over this road with ol' Miss, and never occupy a seat outside the drawin' room before."

Ol' Miss! Meaning the grandmother of Lucy. The beloved dead; recalling them tears the heart; but they are ours, safe and past harm, bedded in the deep safe grave of our remembrance. But with the dead in life, *with Stephen*——

Ellen traveling, was Ellen at her best. She came back from assisting a mother with a fretting baby.

"You see that woman two seats along, Miss Lucy? The one that looks used to hard work? She's going to her boy, who's in a camp with pneumonia. She's never been on a sleeper before."

Lucy got up and went to her. These were days when even the habitually reserved did the incredibly unexpected thing. She was a hardy woman, past middle age, tall and spare, the muscles of her face fixed and severe, visibly a person used to simple customs.

It did not take long to know all. She was a widow, a tailoress who ran a little shop for repairing and mending in her home town. She had raised her two boys unaided from babyhood. She was hurrying to

the oldest who was at Camp Devon, in Massachusetts. It was her first journey farther than thirty miles from home in her life.

She did not speak of the other boy; but after a little arose and spread a suitcase open on the seat before her. Its contents exposed, she was confused; a second pair of corsets; a second cheap wash blouse; a nightgown; underwear; a comb of black rubber, and a wooden-backed hairbrush.

She found a clipping cut from a newspaper, and handed it to Lucy. She watched her as she read it:

> Boone Lacey, who was drafted for service in the American Army in the beginning of the war, has been killed at the front. He is the son of Mrs. Sallie Cowgill Lacey, known and esteemed by her many friends in this town; a son of Mann Lacey deceased; and a descendant of the Boones, Cowgills, and Laceys, pioneer settlers in the early history of this section of the state. The Big Sandy district is proud of its sons.

Who can explain the ways of grief? Or read the workings of the human heart? Lucy who never again saw this plain, tall woman with the impassive face was strangely comforted. She felt that for some reason which she could not make clear to her reasoning, she owed this chance companion a debt.

It may have been a realization of the common heritage of mutual woe; it may have been a renewed sense of woe's universality; it may have been a comprehension that of women, it is the plain and simple woman who, in war, pays the most. Not only that she is the feeblest and offers the least resistance; but because she least understands what war is about, and visualizes few

if any of the compensations to the world that are supposed at once to be the price and the rewards of the sacrifice. And who when the struggle is ended has only her muteness, and her dead.

* * * * * *

The train not only was late getting into New York, but faithful to the conditions holding in war time, was very late. Ellen Jackson, again the grim major-domo, took no chances. She had a full comprehension that among this war's manifestations, a congested transfer service was one. Followed by Lucy, and attended by a Red Cap, she emerged with the crowd into the concourse of the Pennsylvania Station. She had seen the trunks put on the train at Ashe; she kept an eye on them along the way; there are ways to do these things if one is an Ellen Jackson trained by an old Lucy Wing. She now led her Red Cap and Lucy in search of them. Being what she was, outwardly subservient and inwardly invincible, when she and Lucy left the station in a taxicab, the two trunks, the one large and the other small, were with them.

"You never know what you're going to be obliged to have out of your trunk, or when," she said with satisfaction. The next hour proved that she was right.

The cab crossed town through Thirty-fourth Street. It wanted twenty minutes yet to seven o'clock. Lucy knew London and Paris, and in lesser degree knew Rome, Berlin and Vienna; but New York ever seemed to her, the temperamental city of them all, bewildering, emotional, responsive, illusive; always it lured and beckoned her; always she seemed about to touch and forever grasp the heart and soul of it.

She looked upon the familiar scenes; the evening crowds already on the streets and surging against the

hurrying thousands still homeward bound; the ceaseless traffic; the moving lines of surface cars; the rumble and roar overhead of the elevated at Sixth Avenue; the towering masses of buildings rising here and there above the general sky line, insubstantial and dreamlike in the dusk, their hundreds of windows still alight.

At Fifth Avenue, the cab after making futile efforts to nose its way, now here, now there, through the jam of vehicles, came to a stop. Traffic ahead was at a halt, blocked by a teeming crowd that packed sidewalk and street alike solidly.

It was a pushing, curious, jostling and good-natured crowd, men and women, boys and young girls. As Lucy and Ellen gazed out upon it, it suddenly went wild, as a nimble person in a business suit ran lightly up the ladder of a fire truck drawn up at the curb; and suddenly reversing himself and hanging by his nimble toes above their heads, entered into nonchalant dialogue, question and answer with the cheering, jubilant pack below. A placard on a standard on the truck announced his name as a popular movie star.

"Are you Americans?"

"Yes!" A thousand voices in vociferous affirmative responded.

"Then buy a Liberty Bond before you leave here; and if you've bought one, buy another. Hands up, who'll buy?"

The hands shot up. And as the taxicab extricated itself by backing out, the nimble gentleman had drawn himself right end up, and, poised on the topmost rung of the ladder, was leading in a cheer as a stalwart male in kilties appeared on the truck below, introduced by a second placard as "A Lady from Hell."

Lucy, as she left the scene, told herself that this spec-

tacle but reconfirmed her claim, that the peoples of themselves are never at war. That the something which her grandmother called *bellicose ardors,* has to be artificially created, and artificially stimulated once it exists.

She tapped on the glass. Why need she and Ellen hurry to their hotel?

The chauffeur turned.

"Go down Broadway, and bring us up Fifth Avenue."

On their return journey, as they crossed Twenty-third Street at Madison Square, that stoic, Ellen, who had faced the pyramids, outwardly at least unmoved, broke into acclaim.

"For the dear Lawd's sake, Miss Lucy!"

Fifth Avenue stretched ahead, brilliant, gleaming; its hundreds of windows, conservation notwithstanding, reckless with lights to-night; a street of banners; a way of flags; an aisle of light and color, unimaginable and unsurpassable.

Avenue of the Allies, a thoroughfare spanned high overhead adown its center, for three and a half miles, by the multi-colored buntings of twenty-six nations; the history of the world was present in these fluttering folds; their every undulation a seeming jubilate of triumphing; their manifold billowing colors, a *Te Deum* of soundless shout. At once the symbolized hope and cry of mankind, history here was assembled in a new reading; its spelling that of a new unity. So for the moment, did the marvelous pageant speak to the suddenly quickened heart of Lucy.

The cab sped along the asphalt, overlooked by the facades of Broadway, the towering point of the Flat-iron Building, and the peak of the Metropolitan tower;

then stopped, blocked again, and this time by a procession.

A heavy-footed and serious-faced company of stolid folk these, taking their business with gravity; a group as it proved, of representatives of one of the little peoples recently declared a nation. Arrived here by some miscarriage before their scheduled time, they were come with their newly authorized flag to make acknowledgment, and give thanks at the Altar of Liberty. They halted before it in some confusion in mid-street, re-forming before they approached. A grave and serious folk they were, the women in their native dress, short full skirts of wool, full white sleeves, bodices and aprons; the men in breeches strapped at the knees, loose-fitting shirts and jackets.

The Altar of Liberty, that faced them across the wide sidewalk, loomed dreamlike behind its gold-tipped standards and their flags; ghostly white against the gulf of black shadow of the park between it and the high straight Metropolitan tower, dreamlike in its turn, and white against the sky.

There would seem indeed to be a hitch, since the altar already was bespoken, and some nature of program taking place. Or were these community singers here to assist in the coming program and merely filling in the gap? From the group that stood upon the platform, led by a male voice and a cornet, rose the words and strains, richly rendered and melodious, of "Old Black Joe."

To the bitter all things are bitter. Lucy laughed aloud, rapped on the glass, and directed the chauffeur to get along. It alike was comical, and was grotesque, that even community singers in war time could so lack the requisite imagination, and greet a newly free

and still hopeful little people with a song, the voice, as it were, of the Negro race in America.

The car made its way on up the Avenue. Lucy looked at Ellen beside her. Few negroes in America definitely can place themselves in their past. Lucy knew it as a fact vouched for by Colonel Tecumseh Craig, and again by her grandmother, that the mother of Ellen was brought from the Congo to Jekyl Island as late as the early '50's, on the private yacht "Wanderer." And that the owner of this yacht, a northern man by the name of Corrie, was expelled from his yacht club in 1859 for having used his boat for such purposes. A story that survived in Lucy's home community through Colonel Te who, still fiercely unreconstructed, brought it to life when put on the defensive by his northern acquaintances.

For twelve years of Ellen's life she was a slave; for fifty-four years to this present moment she was a servant to the more fortunate race that freed her.

What at this moment were her thoughts? Lucy wondered as they rolled along the flag-decked avenue. What were her speculations concerning the pageant she gazed on? Was it because of these unvoiced thoughts that her face as always was inscrutable; her eyes as ever noncommittal? Lucy had lived her life beside this brown-skinned woman; day in and day out; from infancy to motherhood; and she, as she admitted now, had no idea.

Assuming that Ellen knew the past story of her race in America, did she know the present-day position of the Negro and his citizenship in the United States? One-ninth of the population, and after sixty years of emancipation, the victim of wide-spread disfranchise-

ment and loss of civic rights; of discrimination in economic opportunity; of lawlessness, including lynching and burning. Triumphant and glorious example of man made free under the Fourteenth Amendment,—these were facts that, if flung from the Altar of Liberty, would bite like vitriol into flesh, into the sanguine satisfaction of these newly freed of the little people of the world.

With Lucy it was a case of *mea culpa*. She could not spare herself. As she stood beside her grandmother in a London drawing-room the winter before the war, she had drawn herself up as with a galvanic shock, to see her English hostess greet a Negro guest; as it proved, a music composer and song writer.

At the moment Lucy was talking to a brown-skinned Oxford student, an Egyptian youth with a rippling high-bridged nose, and keen black eyes; and her grandmother close at hand talked Tagore with an East Indian in a jeweled turban.

She told herself now as then, that behind these two races, the Indian and the Egyptian, stretched two great civilizations; and behind the third race, lay no such thing.

But say to herself what she might, a sense of the misery of life anew swept over her; of the helplessness everywhere in the world about her; at hand as elsewhere; the cruelties from which, to those who suffered, no way of present escape offered.

She thought of Stephen; and of the chances of final rectitude to a world afflicted, through the agencies that he gave himself to further. And her heart for one so young was skeptical—she was her grandmother's child—was bitter indeed.

Fifth Avenue stretched ahead, glorious with lights, transcendent with color, a street pageant not easy to equal again in the history of the world. For her its glory was dimmed; its promise was as the hopes of the world too often in the past—a shadow of the substance, a travesty.

CHAPTER XXIV

IT was half past seven when Lucy and Ellen reached their rooms at the hotel. The day stretched back to the lifting mists of the Virginia mountains at sunup. It was not over for Lucy. She held two slips of paper, memoranda of telephone calls from Warrington Adams. He would know by now that her train was five hours late.

The telephone rang. Lucy answered.

"Mrs. Janvier?"

"Yes."

"One moment, please."

Then the voice of Warrington. "Well, here at last. Welcome to our city. No time for formalities, as it happens. Tell me in a word, are you tired?"

"Moderately so. It's good to hear your voice, Warrington."

"I have to talk quickly. A thing has happened incredible even in an old newspaper man's experience. I have a chance to show you history being made. Can you get into evening togs and rush yourself to my office in a taxi? I can't come to get you, and I can't explain. Yes or no, quick?"

"Yes."

"Good work. Ten minutes to dress, five to get to me here. Main entrance. I'll have you met." The telephone clicked.

Ellen Jackson in the very nature of her was a fatalist.

This may be one reason why she never lost her head. She had kept her eye on those trunks from Ashe to the present moment that saw them come in the door from the corridor. Her prescience was justified by a word to her now from Lucy. With unruffled calm she produced her keys, and as Lucy's trunk was set down in the adjoining bedroom she unlocked it. She paused in the act of taking a black evening dress from its hanger.

"Can't go without eating," she said. And after her own fashion of achieving what she purposed, she presently opened the door to an attendant with a tray, as Lucy, now dressed, turned to pick up her wrap.

She approached the girl, a cup of hot bouillon in her hand.

"Drink it."

Lucy drank it. She wondered if she ever had disobeyed Ellen.

* * * * * *

It took her just four minutes to reach the great modern building that housed Warrington's paper. He met her on an upper floor as she and the messenger who had waited for her below emerged from the elevator. She heard the quick tap of his crutch before she saw him, the witness that life had betrayed him also.

He beamed as he caught sight of her, a short, square man of thirty-one. Nature had given him a set of features that scoffed at tragedy. Chief of these was a nose like to a Punchinello's. His eyes, small and close-set, were alert, kindly, and—watchful. In moments of intensity they took on the piercing quality of the hawk's. Here was a person to be reckoned with, a force already deferred to in this office.

* * * * * *

On Warrington's part, he saw, as Lucy stepped out

the elevator doorway, a woman slim and elegant, attended by all the charm and lure of modish and costly apparel. Her voluminous evening wrap was fallen apart, its open collar of fur revealing a white throat and a suggestion of white shoulder. Her face which was like a smooth and flawless white flower looked its relief to see him appear.

He loved her with a cruel and terrible intensity, powerful and at times insupportable, this wife of his missing friend. He had fallen in love with her before Stephen met her, having known her first as a fledgling girl, and as a young woman of fineness and charm.

Lucy saw only that he, as ever, beamed at beholding her. His left hand was occupied with his crutch. His right hand shot out with a little approving pat upon her shoulder. There was a becoming freedom about Warrington, very far from familiarity, that in its heartiness and cheer made for ease and enjoyment.

"Quick work, sister. I can depend on you. Come along briskly now. In exactly six minutes you and I will be in our taxi beating it round to 39th and good old Broadway. Tell me in a word, how are you, my dear?"

He did not wait for her answer. He threw open a door and led her through the room revealed, to a communicating room beyond it. She was conscious of the click, as of telegraph instruments, and was aware of a figure here and there, busy with its own concerns.

Warrington, taking a bit of paper that a young man went and fetched, handed it to Lucy. It was incredibly thin and smooth and tough, like onion skin, and bore printed, or were they typewritten characters? Her eyes followed the opening words, and then lifting, stared at Warrington.

He nodded in answer. Then fell to tweaking that

grotesquely great nose—poor proboscis—with a forefinger knuckle, outrageously.

"The unofficial text it is, Lucy, of perhaps the most momentous diplomatic note in the history of the world. It came in less than an hour ago, a complete surprise. The way in which the wireless sent in a dispatch of such tremendous import shatters all precedents. We telephoned the State Department at Washington, and neither they nor yet the Swiss Legation, have received any word of it. It evidently has not yet been transmitted through the regular channels. Wirelessed from Nansen, it must have been caught up in France, and cabled over."

He motioned with his free right hand to the paper. "Read it, my dear. That's why I asked you to come to me here. It's the opening of events to come, so stupendous no man as yet can dare predict the end; the reaching of the crucial climax in the greatest of all wars."

Her eyes returned to the paper in her hand, so thin, so transparent, and with its import so momentous.

BERLIN, October 12, 1918.

In reply to the questions of the President of the United States of America, the German Government hereby replies: The German Government has accepted the terms laid down by President Wilson in his address of January 8, and in his subsequent addresses on the foundation of a permanent peace of justice. Consequently its object in entering into discussion would be only to agree upon the practical details of the application of these terms. The German Government believes that the Governments of the powers associated with the Government of the United States also takes the position taken by President Wilson in his address.

The German Government, in accordance with the Austro-

Hungarian Government, for the purpose of bringing about an armistice, declares itself ready to comply with the proposition of the President in regard to evacuation. The German Government suggests that the President may occasion the meeting of a mixed commission for making the necessary arrangements concerning the evacuation.

The present German Government, which has undertaken the responsibility for this step towards peace, has been formed by conference and in agreement with the great majority of the Reichstag. The Chancellor supported in all his actions by the will of the majority, speaks in the name of the German Government and of the name of the German people.

(Signed) SOLF.

State Secretary of Foreign Affairs.

Lucy here looked at Warrington again. Her lips had parted, and her eyes were wide. She was to be forgiven, poor, unhappy child, wife of Stephen, that she saw it first as it affected her personally.

Again Warrington nodded. "It may mean all to you, or nothing, my dear. I wanted you to see the copy, to handle it, to visualize it."

He took the paper from her fingers.

"History in the concrete it is, we may say, held by you in your two hands. I venture to say you as yet, beyond the heads of the staffs in the New York newspaper offices, are one of the probable dozen in this country to know what has happened."

He swung to the table on his crutch and laid the copy down; said a word to a young man, and returned to Lucy.

"Now let's beat it. I've done half a day's work in the half hour since I called you, that we may have the next couple of hours free. Unless between here and there we fall afoul of traffic troubles, do you know

where we're going to find ourselves in five minutes from now?"

He on his crutch was quicker than most who are better qualified, this victim from his birth of congenital hip trouble. He and Lucy were back in the corridor, and in another moment he touched the button for the elevator.

As for Warrington, as they waited, his heart thudded hideously. She had looked at him as he put his question. A look of inquiry it was, but so kind, so full of sweetness for him, her friend to whom she always was grateful, that he groaned within himself for his helplessness under it.

Always she afforded him joy; about her for him was a natural ability to please; an instinct for what to him was unerringly the desirable, and the delightful thing, in woman. To the world doubtless she was a little cool and removed. But he loved this in her also, and for selfish reasons; if to the most she was withdrawn, to him she was ever gentle; if to the many she was cold, to him she invariably was tender.

"Don't keep me waiting forever, Warrington. Where are we going?"

They had entered the elevator, briskly crowded. He nodded to this man, and to that one; some were without hats, going from one floor to another; and one was in his shirt sleeves. His voice lowered as he answered her:

"His nobs, the President of these United States, and his party, left the Waldorf-Astoria, as the Associated Press got its answer from Washington in regard to this cable; he is on his way to the Metropolitan Opera House to attend the concert given this evening for the benefit of the Queen Margarita fund for the Blinded

Soldiers of Italy. This is the twelfth of October, Columbus Day, you grasp. Italy has recovered and proved herself and come into line on issues bigger than her own self-interest, and we in America feel vociferous about it, and want to hand her a bouquet in congratulation. Thus it happens that Mr. Wilson, on his way to the Metropolitan, possibly the person in the world most individually concerned, knows nothing of the receipt of this German note."

They had left the elevator, and were hurrying through the doorway to their cab at the curb. Warrington kept up his running fire of talk.

"In eight minutes by that clock on the wall back there, the President is due to take his seat in his box. You will have taken yours by then, I trust. Don't ask me how I secured two seats in a box at this hour. All but grand larceny went into the business of getting 'em."

He saw her into the taxicab and himself followed. "You and his nobs being seated, while the house is having its once-over of its great man, arrives a messenger from the Associated Press, who hands into the President's box a copy of the momentous note; you and I and certain others of the newspaper fraternity, the only creatures in the audience who are behind the secret."

The cab stopped in line.

"Here we are, my dear. See 'em coming. Like a first night in the prehistoric days before the war."

Warrington, apart from being stamped by his lameness, was a marked man. Stocky and heavy, with tremendous shoulders, his face observant and intent, he already was known as a coming personality, and as such was being recognized now, here and there in the

crowded lobby. Whether through the sheer force of his quick-driving personality, or because of his crutch; or because he was conceded a coming notable man, a lane made itself for him and his companion whom he was piloting.

Lucy following behind him, gave a quick, small cry: "Oh! Warrington!"

But when he turned, she shook her head and motioned him to proceed.

"I thought I knew some one in the crowd, but I was wrong. This man was in evening dress, and the one I had in mind is a workingman, careless, and rough-looking."

The incident was so evidently on her mind that after they passed in and were headed for the stairway, Warrington swung about again, and looked at her interrogatively.

"Anything wrong?"

"No. And if it were the man I fancied, a one-time quasi friend at home, of mine and Stephen's, I've no explanation even for myself, of why I was so agitated. I'll tell you of this person another time."

He went ahead at this, looking about him this way and that, with quick turns of his great head, aggressive and pervasive; Lucy following beside him and his crutch, up the stairs, herself a compelling figure in her costly black; the crowd about them shifting and changing each moment of their progress.

Every nature of allied uniform seemed here, come to do honor to Italy, recovered and victorious, and hailed a full brother at arms, high-minded and disinterested; the belted khaki of the English and the Canadian; the olive-drab of the American; the gray-blue of the Frenchman; there a group of aviators with

the golden spread wings upon their left breasts; here the natty blue of the navy; cynosure of every eye, a tall Greek soldier in his national costume, looking like a ballet-dancer; and, easily predominating to-night, the Italian in his blue—Alpini, Grenadier, and the feather-crested Bersaglieri—guests from Italy at the moment, and for the occasion.

Women also flashed and shimmered by them on the stairs, their satin slippers twinkling, their wraps thrown wide because of the mildness of the evening, their arms and white shoulders gleaming.

Blocking the passage outside the parterre boxes, a young girl stepped forward, and put a program in Lucy's hand. She had a cool and matter-of-fact little face, and was clad, or un-clad as one took it, in a spangled white gown none too fresh, about her elbows and her shoulder blades, a wispy length of blue tulle that had seen better days.

Her air was altogether of business. Having put the program into Lucy's hand, she turned and calmly expectant, briskly demanded a dollar for it from Warrington, who at this suddenly unbent, grinning as he recognized her.

"What? Another holdup, Peggy? After that one by you Sunday night at the Hippodrome?"

"The regulation price, Warrington. It's for Italy's blind this time. Go down and fetch it up, please."

"Broadway?" Lucy inquired as they resumed their way, "Chorus?"

"Chorus nothing. Go feed yourself to the hungry sharks for that. I took it that of course you knew each other. It's my own small cousin, little Peggy Tewksbury, granddaughter of the great and only K. E. She sees me calmly, not alone as a steady source

of supply, but as a perpetual asset. She comes to the office very near daily, presupposing space and favors of me, because her especial war organization's plans require 'em. She's a great little level-head, strictly business, her grandfather's own cool and always definite grandchild. Oh, we've types and types; brought out by this war."

They reached their box. Lucy saw a house already filled from floor to topmost gallery, and ablaze with the flags of every allied nation, the green, red and white of Italy predominant. She was removing her wrap when the great orchestra stopped, checking itself, and as instantly began "The Star-Spangled Banner," the audience rising as one—pit, grand tier, parterre, balconies, glittering curve above curve; and, amid a tumult of applause, the bravos of foreign voices, and the cheers of the gallery, the President, the Italian Ambassador, and their party entered their box.

A sense of excitement seized Lucy as it swept over her why she was here in the Metropolitan Opera House, gazing at the man on whom the hopes of the world had centered, whether for weal or for woe; either the wisest man in his time, the great figure of history; or the veriest platitudinarian that ever carried the peoples. Unknown to herself, the hand of Lucy sought her bodice against her heart, which beat unwontedly.

She had never seen Mr. Wilson before. There was a shock of the unexpected, that this superlatively immaculate person in evening clothes was he. His hair was whiter than she had anticipated. On the contrary, here was an erectness and a vitality of bearing unexpected. Bowing to the welcoming tumult his eyes sur-

veyed the house, sweeping the stage with its pageant of Metropolitan chorus, and military band of the Royal Italian Grenadieri; and as they traveled, smiled spontaneously. The smile about the mouth, on the contrary, seemed mechanical, and even fixed; the White House smile, the grandmother of Lucy had called it, as applied to other incumbents.

The long, bony jaw of this man in the central box of the horseshoe was set with a grimness, however, that better seemed to tell the story of the amazing career; ten years ago a college president, a schoolmaster; this smiling man standing in the foreground of the Morgan box; to-night the chief magistrate of a hundred million people, and the dominant figure of the world.

The orchestra of the Royal Italian Grenadieri, succeeding the American anthem, broke into the national hymn of Italy. The house, pit to galleries, Italian and allies, guests and hosts, went mad, a thousand flags breaking forth in a thousand madly up-flung hands, shouts and bravos arising. Hand in hand at this great moment were Italy and America! Surely this pledged friendship would never fail one the other!

The chief figure in the house, standing as before, gazed on the scene of brilliancy, furor and color, his eyes still smiling.

Lucy suddenly was conscious of the thought and the care that had arranged for her presence here. She turned about to the figure standing at her side.

"Oh, Warrington, you *do* know that I'm grateful to you for this?"

"Look!" he handed her a pair of glasses.

A crucial moment in world history this. The Grenadieri were come to the final strains of their anthem.

A figure from the group flanking the President, had stepped to the back of the box, and was receiving a slip of paper handed in.

"Tumulty," said Warrington, at Lucy's elbow.

He unfolded and looked at the paper, and handed it to a second person, a tall, slight man with eminently the face of the man-of-thought who, at the whispered word that accompanied the presentation, read it.

"Colonel Edward House," said Warrington.

He returned it to the secretary, who advanced and gave it to Mr. Wilson; Colonel House left the box.

A sound as of wind passing over a forest followed as the audience sat down.

The President now seated, glancing down at the paper seemed to stiffen, to rigidly become taller; the fingers that held the bit of paper tightened upon it as he read.

Then his hand fell, closing upon the copy of the German note, and for full a moment he gazed ahead, his eyes fixed, his lips parted, clairvoyant, one would say; the look of one seeing a great and longed-for goal ahead! The long jaw suddenly set itself. And with this he passed the paper first to his wife on his one hand; and then to the Italian Ambassador on his other. Two minutes had covered the episode.

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Lucy, seated now, let her gaze sweep about the house. She caught Warrington's arm.

"There's the man I thought I knew, and I was right. He is downstairs, standing in the back of the aisle opposite us. The first time I saw him he wore a workman's clothes, and carried a dinner bucket. He disappeared at the time the war opened. Warrington, will you think I'm quite, *quite* beside myself, when I say

I'm convinced he has some word, some knowledge he can give me of Stephen? He's gone; lost in the crowd; forgive me; now I'll turn about and attend to business."

* * * * * *

Warrington watched her, she watching the stage; taking note of the changes in her since he last had seen her, at midsummer of this same year. He thought of her as she had been four years before. Her perceptions sharpened by sorrow and experience, she visibly was changed; older, unbelievably so, with a quiet that cut him to the heart; a grievously wounded soul. Her thin but beautiful shoulders sloped wearily into as beautiful but listless arms. The little shadow that marked the springing of her throat, marked a sharpening also of the lines and contours of her neck and throat.

Warrington never blinked facts. He was not made that way. He loved her with all the terrible force that lay in his short, thick, powerful body. Not that he feared himself in this. There are circumstances that are beyond any conceived obligation of mere honor. The present case was one of these; where to fail, or where so much as to consider the chance of failing, was inconceivable. Nothing could move him from his moral anchorage here; he absolutely was convinced of this.

It was one of the ironies, that no person who knew Lucy and Stephen prior to their engagement would have conceived of them as in any sense complementary. Yet once they were seen together in this relationship, it became impossible to conceive of them otherwise than as triumphantly complementary. The girl did well, did right, to choose Stephen. For veritable charm of body

and spirit in a man, Warrington put Stephen first. He possessed indeed that blessing reserved for the few, joy of the spirit. Looking at Lucy now, and recalling the two as they were here in New York in their brief union of those short weeks, he thought of the great loves and young lovers of time and story; Hero and Leander; Francesca and Paola; Héloïse and Abélard.

As for himself? Warrington's big shoulders shrugged, while his glance dwelt with the hunger of the unsatisfied on the curve of the white shoulder, lifted to the colorless cheek, and passed caressingly over the small shapely head so inexpressibly dear to him. His was an intelligence that spared no one, himself least of any, but cut to the bone and laid truth bare. What matter if it also lay quivering? His love for this woman here beside him should not degenerate into a scourge for the senses only; if it was an agony and a torment, it had its moments of exaltation.

Warrington did not decry himself; estimating his qualities shrewdly, and placing his values high. If the opinion were asked of one of his superiors at the newspaper office, this person likely would say that Adams was a far-sighted, hard-as-nails proposition, a tremendous worker, and a coming man. But neither did Warrington lose sight of what fashion and nature his qualities were. If Stephen in the eyes of the world stood for the modern Amadis of Gaul, the young man ideal of the twentieth century, he, Adams, was the brawny, pock-mocked, hard-hitting Du Guesclin, grim through an all-too-prevailing sense of reality.

Warrington loved his work. He had a passion for shoving aside an accumulation of responsibilities at the crucial moment of the night's stress and needs; to go downstairs in his building and stand and watch the

silently whirling great presses. It was an amazing thing to see the news of the world caught up, printed, folded, sorted, and thrown out in sets of fifty daily papers each. It overwhelmed the mind, and stunned the imagination, however often he beheld it.

The silently revolving presses, fed with paper from the floor above, from rolls weighing many tons, were Gargantuan mouths, monster-spawned, insatiable, unappeasable, calling always for more. It need not matter what this more is, so that within a reasonable limit it exclude the merely average and the normal; that it smack reasonably big as compared in its dimensions with the usual; war, famine, pestilence; storm, earthquake, holocaust; these were within the prescribed abnormalities; birth, death, marriage, divorce; industrial revolt and upheaval; mob violence; homicide, fratricide, suicide; the rise and fall of armies, and of nations; the assassination and the abdication of rulers, kings and emperors.

So did it seem to Warrington it must be with the human soul that, at its close, would choose to be as a page close-written in the characters of life. Many things must write themselves thereon; such as desire, and also denial; torment, and also ecstasy; abnegation and satiety; worthinesses and smallnesses; triumphs and failures; decencies, lawlessness, rebellions, acquiescence; these and much else must write themselves upon the soul of him who at the close would say, *"I have lived!"*

* * * * * *

Lucy turned. "Warrington, I find I can't stand any more. The music, these too great choruses, the flags, the uniforms, a sense of what this German note really may mean—I'm a bit overwhelmed. May we go?"

He was up, his crutch in hand, on the instant. "Come along then, sister; it couldn't be better in that case for me. I'll go with you to your hotel, and we'll have a bite of supper together, and then I'll get a move on. My day is just beginning."

She looked at him piteously as she put her cloak on, aided by his by no means awkward help. He was the one person in the world to whom she unreservedly showed her weaknesses.

"My courage failed me three days ago at home, Warrington. Each time it happens, I come on to you to be helped back to a point where I can go on."

"What! What am I hearing?" He shook his head at her horrifically. "Going to be a little hindering thing on my heart and hands some more, are you? And where, pray, am I to find the time for you, my work, the business of a passport, and the rest of it, that I may get over on the other side to be Blondel to my and your Richard?"

But there was neither rancor nor impatience in his tones; nor yet in the smile with which he regarded her. A hideously impatient man by nature and by reputation, there was not that in Lucy, so it would seem, that could irritate, nor yet exasperate him.

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Lucy in her bedroom said good night to Ellen. "I'll undress slowly; I want to sleep when I do go to bed."

She closed her door with this, and locked it. Slipped out of her dress and into a negligée, and stopped; standing still; looking long and eagerly about the room. It was the moment for which she had lived since three days ago she determined to come east.

This was the room, this the little suite, in which she

passed the short weeks of her married life with Stephen. She doubtlessly had done a wicked thing, since in Europe there were women and children, homeless and starving. She since had held as her own this little suite, a fact known only to Ellen. Retaining it as a refuge; a place to which she might flee as to Stephen himself; and find safety as within his arms, and solace as upon his breast.

On that February day so far receded, Stephen and Warrington, Helen, and Mr. Janvier, had met her and Kitty at the train gate. They had gone, the group of them, directly from the train to the municipal building. From there they came uptown to the chantry at Grace Church, where by prearrangement, she and Stephen were married. For the short weeks following for her and Stephen, this was their hotel, this their suite, this their bedroom.

She up-flung her arms at this point, turning where she stood, and walking about. This way, through too poignant recall, lay the madness she must fight.

Her mind went back to yet another happening of this evening. As she left the Opera House, she saw Eugene Lelewel again, and called his name.

He was leaving, too, one of a group of several men going out through the lobby together.

He must have heard; she could have sworn he glanced at her. His nerves were of the sort evidently not to be surprised or stampeded. He made no sign, passing on ahead of her, and out the door.

It confirmed for her what she as by instinct knew—that he could tell her something of Stephen. Nor did Warrington laugh at her when she told him this. Nor yet did he decry the second message come to her over

the telephone. A happening, he said, by no means to be discounted because it savored of the unexplainable. He was too good a newspaper man, he hoped, to discount until disproven, any clew. Why shouldn't prisoners escaped by way of Ghent have word for her? There was nothing fantastic in this as a possibility; nor was it in itself unreasonable. Such things, outcome of this war, were happening every day.

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Dwelling on these matters, she fought off crowding thoughts more poignant; thoughts like the fabled gadfly ever pursuing; knowing that in the end it would prove of no avail.

She fled to these rooms in this hotel as a refuge when all else failed her. There was another chamber, and this one in her own heart, which she never willingly opened; but that always was with her. A chamber where was locked a knowledge. She had not forgotten, and could not forget, that Stephen of his own election, left her; that it had rested with himself; that his country then was a spectator, and uncommitted; *and she had not yet forgiven him.*

This was why life failed her; this was why she wandered restless; why, for the most, she thrust her little son from her; why, in the direction of certain recalls, madness lay. This was why she clung to anything, however fantastic, which promised sign or sound out of the silence, that would quiet or comfort her bitter soul.

She looked about her in the bedroom now; seeking distraction that would afford respite, and caught up the evening papers that Warrington, always prodigal, left with her; opened the bundle of them; and on a front page read:

LONDON—*Cable.*—Prince Antoine Gaston Philippe of Bourbon-Orleans, great-grandson of King Louis Philippe of France, has died in a military hospital from injuries suffered in the fall of an airplane.

He was flying from France to England and was forced to make a landing at Old Southgate. The plane got out of control and crashed into a cottage. The pilot was killed and the Prince fatally injured.

Prince Antoine was the son of Prince Gaston, Count d'Eu, and Princess Isabelle of Braganza. He was born in 1881 and early in the war was a Captain in the Royal Canadian Dragoons.

Prince Antoine, who through his mother was a grandson of the last Emperor of Brazil, and through his father a great-grandson of King Louis Philippe of France, after having sought in vain service in the French army at the beginning of the war, succeeded in securing a commission in one of the Canadian cavalry corps at the front in France, and won promotion to the rank of Captain, as well as the English War Cross.

Like his two elder brothers he received his military training in Austria, being, a scion of a formerly reigning house in France, barred from St. Cyr, or any of the other State military academies in France. Like his brothers too, he was awarded a commission of Lieutenant of Reserves in the Sixth Regiment of Austrian Hussars. Jointly with them he severed his connection with the Austrian army, returned his Austrian orders and distinctions to the late Emperor Francis Joseph, and withdrew from all Austrian clubs and associations as soon as ever Austria declared war upon France. It will be remembered

> that his father served as a Captain on the Staff of General McClellan in the Civil War, and was the author of a "History of the Civil War in America." And that his great-grandfather, Louis Philippe, afterward Citizen-King of France, in his earlier years of exile, spent some time in America.

Lucy thrust the paper from her and sank on the couch at hand, burying her face in her hands, her head bowed against the pillows. Forces greater than she spoke.

How long she stayed there, her face in her hands, she did not know. She was stunned; dazed as by a lightning flash revealing the vast landscape of human life and its destiny. She was overcome as never before with a sense of the past in us. She saw that the acts, good or bad, do not die with the generation, or with the individual begetting them; nor yet their consequences; that the personal integrities, or the lack of these, do not cease with our demise.

A terror came upon her; a necessity to search her thoughts and her acts, her attitudes and her deeds; aware that at some world crisis yet to come, she stood committed to speak through the generations ahead, through her own baby son, safe now in his home at Ashe.

Again terror and questionings overcame her; and she found herself on her knees beside the couch, turning to God, crying His name aloud, and asking that He help her.

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By and by she lifted herself, getting to her feet, dazed and faint, so that she was obliged to hold to the edge of the desk at hand. She went to her trunk, stand-

ing open against the wall. She turned the combination lock of the small jewel drawer and took from this compartment what for her were its treasures.

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When she fell asleep, her face on the pillow piteously weary in its repose, these two treasures lay on the pillow beside her, her fingers still closed upon them.

The one of these was a package of the letters written to her by her husband after he left her; in the event he did not return, a heritage for her son. The other was a baby's absurdly small and fine white sock, saved for Stephen the father; the first footwear his son had worn, and proof of this wee person's vigor, with the toe kicked through.

CHAPTER XXV

LUCY'S grandmother, great old girl, as Stephen so delighted to call this puissant octogenarian, had the name in her home city, of having a dining-acquaintance in more capitals of the world than any other woman in Kentucky; with her social roots thrust into soils everywhere.

Some one on a time asked her why she was a life member of a certain club, standing for the allied arts, that houses itself in Gramercy Park in New York City. The question as put to her ran even pertinently:

"Since if you've any really lively concern in any of the arts whatsoever, you've successfully concealed it, why a life member here?"

Mrs. Wing's reply was as direct:

"I'm a life member of this club, if you must know, because it's housed in Samuel Tilden's home. I like the right to go there and break bread when I choose. It brings back a valued friend, and a political betrayal that turned me face about, and sent me ultimately into the Democratic party under Grover Cleveland. As for art, I get my gratification in that line, too. Carved in a mantel of the present dining room of this house, along with other native leaves and blossoms, is a bit of rat-tailed dock, homeliest of American weeds. Its replica here affords me remarkably keen pleasure, suggestive as it is of the homely savor that as a race

characteristic is our own, leavening us, a diverse peoples, and proclaiming us American."

Lucy and her grandmother, as the girl grasped now, had been singularly good and lively friends. The older intellect, that was tart, alert, and uncompromising, held the girl who herself was no fool.

For the sake and the memory of this grandmother, Lucy, one Monday, went around to this club for lunch, having a guest's privileges. It was November. She had lingered in New York, held by the talk of peace, and by Warrington's plans that were in the making, to go over directly following this event.

Sitting at a table awaiting her order, she looked about her. Stands of the allied flags brightened the dark paneling of the walls; as also did a little motor-corps girl, who in her natty uniform lunched at a near-by table; as did likewise the uniforms of a group of middle-aged naval officers at another table.

War, everywhere war; or some expression of it. Was she wrong? Was it through artificial stimulations such as these that peoples were kept at their present high state of emotionalism, and therefore compliance? Were they tools the world over? Were they anywhere, and in any sense, the originating and driving force in this world cataclysm? Did they in this speak of themselves, and with an accent not to be mistaken? Or were they ever dull of wit; quiescent; permitting the idea to be implanted?

Her luncheon arrived here, and she gave it her attention. She was just from a visit with Mrs. Kingston Tewksbury, a friend of her grandmother; an old New Yorker of fortune, and of strong if circumscribed character.

"A myopic provincial," Mrs. Wing delighted to de-

fine her friend; "*bourgeoise* among citizens of the world; a tribal survival, crying to the world to save her from herself. I speak of Juliette Tewksbury, that was Juliette Wynne, and her heavy, faithful soul."

Seventy-odd years ago, the grandmother of Lucy came to the Wynne country home on the Hudson River for a visit; she was a girl of sixteen, and a pupil in a fashionable New York boarding and day school in Eleventh Street, a classmate of Sophie Wynne, the oldest daughter in the family. Juliette Wynne at the time was a child of nine. The intimacy then begun with the Wynne family had continued.

Lucy was expected, and the man in bottle-green-and-buff livery, himself elderly and thin-shanked, who opened the door, delivered her over to a maid, who conducted her upstairs.

Since Lucy was a child she paid one call, if no more, on Mrs. Tewksbury, on each visit to New York; and came once to dine.

She was in her sitting room, off which her bedroom opened, and turned about in her chair before a table, as Lucy came in, ushered by the maid.

She was an ugly old woman, large and stolid, with a big and bulbous nose; a person as heavily dutiful as she was heavily unimaginative; in her day as conscientiously occupying the Tewksbury box at the Metropolitan Opera House on Monday nights as the Tewksbury pew at a far downtown church on Sunday mornings. Her children were married; she had grandchildren and great-grandchildren; and lived alone with her servants since her husband died. Her black dress was ugly and uncompromising, a gown that any servant in her employ would have scorned. Heavy in manner, without tact or finesse, the last of a passing caste, of a

day Victorian, the sovereign weight of accustomed power made her nevertheless a regal old woman.

"Warrington gave me your message last night, my dear, that you would be to see me this forenoon. I had them call your hotel at once."

Lucy had met Warrington Adams in this house when she was seventeen years old. He was the great-nephew of Mrs. Tewksbury, a son of the original Sophie's daughter; himself a Californian.

Warrington never hid any lights he could claim under a bushel; he was eminently practical. He made himself useful to his aunt from the time he settled in New York, the family connection undeniably being valuable. There were those who attributed to the connection some part in Warrington's swift and spectacular rise in his profession; but in this they were wrong, it being inevitable, and due to the man himself.

The heavy old woman turned, and nodded toward the table. She had put on great weight in middle life, and it made her movements ponderous.

"I'm folding and directing circulars for my granddaughter, Peggy. Her war-relief organization sent out appeals for secretarial help. I'm wondering if I could learn to use a typewriter? I've always felt I had it in me to make a business woman."

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Lucy, at her lunch at the old club, recalled Mrs. Tewksbury's laboriously meticulous table; the stack of circulars; the neat piles of envelopes; the checked-off lists; the tremulous and yet vigorous handwriting. Miss Leigh, the personal secretary of Mrs. Tewksbury, relieved her alike of the burden of personal correspondence, of telephone conversations, of errands to the bank, and to the stores; represented her on com-

mittees, knowing indeed very much more about the affairs of her employer than this person herself. Her trustees, from time to time, as announced by the papers, took vast blocks of Liberty bonds in her name; and large sums were reported as given in her name, to war charities and relief committees. Mrs. Tewksbury, directing circulars laboriously, bore witness to that new-born necessity stirring within her at seventy-nine, as in her sister women of the day, to be actively and individually a part of the world's work about her.

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Lucy sighed impatiently and rose, picked up her fur scarf, glanced at the motor-corps girl in her natty uniform, at the naval group in their trappings, and left the dining room; going through the main rooms of the club with their war-time quiet and emptiness.

Descending to the lobby, she glanced at the clock on the wall above the heads of a row of colored-girl bell-hops and pages, further evidences of war-time and its exigencies. It was four minutes of one o'clock.

Then with a glance at the women clerks in the office, she went out, a telling figure with an arresting type of face, that eyes always followed.

She winked as the sudden bright light of the sunny midday greeted her; then looked to the blue of the arching sky above Gramercy Park; not the least of her joy in New York City coming from the effects it offers of light and color.

She stared. The air, so crystalline and so shining, high above the roofs surrounding the square, was filled with a thousand, with a thousand times a thousand——

Were they pigeons? White pigeons? Her mind harked to Ashe, with its open lawn and its fantails, ever ascending, circling, and descending. The sky was

cloudless, true, but the air had an opalescent quality as when light shines through vapor. In this soft brilliancy these innumerable floating, and as she deemed them, *winged* white objects, seemed of ethereal airiness and brightness; lifting, falling, soaring, streaming, not by thousands now, but by tens of thousands.

Standing where she first had stopped, arrested, she lifted a hand to her forehead. Was the trouble with *her,* that she was unable to understand? She was dazed and bewildered.

Then she was aware of divers deep-toned sounds filling the air, prolonged and blaring. Were they sirens? As she stood asking herself what they meant, the deeper notes were pierced by the sudden clamor of a hundred thousand shrieking whistles, coarse, flutelike or shrill.

She turned, looking westward through 20th Street toward Broadway, a narrow thoroughfare between high canyon walls. Soft shining white objects were pouring, spouting, eddying from every window up and down the clifflike façades of every building. Something urged her to the curb, where seen through an angle between cornices and roofs, the mounting white tower of the Metropolitan Building cleaved the noonday blue sky. A myriad windows pierced the gleaming shaft, and from each window of the myriad host eddied fresh accessions of white objects to those already sailing toward her on the current of the air, lifting and falling as they came. A streaming, shining host coming to join those already above the open square of Gramercy, which now fluttered down, to tree-top, to bush and shrub, to fountain, grass and gravel path, within the high iron fence.

And now she realized that these drifting, settling,

myriad shining objects that streamed into the brilliancy of the day from everywhere were scraps of paper, large, small, square, oblong.

A church bell clanged, madly and riotously; another rang out, more decorous with its single, deep-booming note again and again repeated; joined now by the pealing of many as unmistakably triumphant. The street in the moment had filled with people, pouring from every doorway and stoop about the four sides of the park. A man rushed from the Players' Club next door, sprang into a great shining car at the curb which flashed away. Mechanically Lucy glanced at the watch on her wrist. It was one o'clock.

People sprung from everywhere, were running toward Broadway. A man and woman, intent and hurrying too, she trig and comely, in handsome suit and costly furs, he with spats and top hat and cane, came abreast Lucy. At which she, always cold but to the few, did at once the most impulsive and most uncharacteristic act of her life; flinging herself, as it were, upon their evident and greater comprehension.

"Oh, what?" she said to the woman.

"*Peace, peace;* oh, haven't you *heard?*" The speaker was crying behind her tight-drawn and modish veil, though her face was irradiated and shining; while that of the man twitched with the stress of his visible and great emotion. "The armistice is signed by Germany, and hostilities ceased to-day."

"Oh, the merciful God——"

Lucy knew she said these words, though her stiff lips moving, made no sound. She became aware that she was staring at these two strangers; that they had seized and were wringing her hands; or had she outstretched her hands to them?

The while the colored-girl bell-hops and pages poured out the club doorway into the street; and every window of the building was filled with faces of the members come up from the grill, or out from the dining room.

The handsome woman who held Lucy's hand was speaking. "We have three sons in France, the oldest twenty-six, who will come back to us now. Who have *you?*"

A husband missing; whether alive or dead she did not know; but she did not tell these strangers this. She broke from them with murmured acknowledgments and apology, and hurried away, following the crowd as it went westward along 20th Street.

CHAPTER XXVI

AT Fourth Avenue Lucy stopped, hesitated, then crossed, making her way north toward 23d Street. People poured on to the sidewalk from every doorway of every building—men, women, boys, girls. Automobiles rushed by, honking as they went.

Her feet padded as on snow, a carpet of the bits of paper that still rained above her, settled this quickly on the sidewalks. From afar came the sound of clamor and cheering voices. She laughed aloud.

She hurried on, why or where she did not ask herself. She lifted her eyes. God in His heaven, it was a sight which clutched the heart. As far as eye could see, up and down Fourth Avenue, the air was white with paper scraps pouring from open windows. More and more automobiles rushed by, adding now to the honking of their horns, the back-firing of their engines, car after speeding car clattering like machine guns as they went. She quickened her pace almost to a run.

At 21st Street a man was locking the door of a shop from whose knob dangled a sign thus quickly made, which in big and rude black letters said, "Closed for *Der Tag.*"

Along this cross street from the direction of Third Avenue came a tall, spare woman, plain of face and person, in her one hand an oil can and a new broom, and a bulging paper bag under her arm. Her eyes

were exultant, and her face stern, and as she came she blew solemnly on a long, red, white and blue paper-horn. A strange angel trumpeter, but promptly Lucy thought of one.

At 23d Street Lucy turned west. It was solid with humanity, these dazed and speechless as they stumbled along, or shrilly vocal, shouting, laughing, and weeping. Two short and stocky men emerging from the subway together suddenly stopped, removed and solemnly smashed each other's derby hats, replaced the ruins on each respective head, and arm in arm, lost themselves in the *mêlée*.

It came on Lucy, who now had crossed the street, that the mob about her at this point were would-be purchasers, clamoring for newspapers from the news-stand. To be sure, a newspaper!

She found her purse and pushed into the confusion. Taking the paper thrust at her by the little woman vendor over the intervening heads of the crowd when her turn came, she made her way out of the press.

EXTRA!

HUNS SURRENDER.

HOSTILITIES CEASED
AT 2 P.M. TO-DAY

She caught her breath as she read the headlines, and sobbed.

And still, and yet still, the air above her rained its white messengers. And still the crowd about her grew, and the clamor. She edged her way to the curb. A level sea of heads filled 23d Street from sidewalk to

sidewalk, the street solid with people. Above this sea, the windows and the balconies of the Metropolitan Building spouted paper, with here and there a streamer of ticker-tape. Each window framed faces, and each balcony was crowded, boy and girl clerks by the hundreds gazing on the scene below. When a girl on a balcony who held a japanned cover of a typewriter in her hand like a gong, clanged on it with something metal, her companions on the balcony shrieked.

Lucy on the curb, her eyes drawn now this way and now that, felt as though she gazed on some gigantic work of release from dire enchantment. A moment since, and each individual creature in all this multitude was bound to his task, eyes, hands, heart, feverish soul, captives beneath a spell, from which for one moment to desist were to bring down the curse. The necromancy brought about by war lifting, like captives from behind bars and prison doors, they poured forth, unrestrained, jubilant, giving way madly to all and any emotions.

Through the ever-increasing numbers Lucy padded her way toward Madison Square, the paper-snow beneath her feet in one spot ankle-deep. *Scraps of paper!* The phrase repeated itself again and again in her mind. Not violated treaties these, not mocking symbols of the diplomacy of the past and its futility, but shining witnesses, messengers of a promised new fashion in peace! God see to it that this time in history, those who made the promise keep their word!

She caught a bit of paper in her gloved hand as it floated down, circling before her face. It was a fragment of newspaper, its edges torn at an angle. She flattened it and scanned it:

Cotton-Goods Contracts for the Army
when the boche was dead
fear a shortage of shipping next
spring.

Yesterday these words were vital in their import and prevailing, the date upon the bit of paper being November 5.

Less time ago than yesterday, the universal state of mind was one of war! She lifted the tiny messenger to her lips and kissed it, then opened her bag, and put it carefully away. It seemed to her that it was sacred, a very precious thing.

She had reached the intersection of 23d Street, Broadway, and Fifth Avenue. The air vibrated to a low, deep boom, repeated and again repeated. She judged it to be the guns on the ships in the North River. From somewhere came again the rapid ricochet of back-firing motors. And still the crowd grew.

She never had loved her kind in the mass. The people, "the dear peepul," as the great old editor of her home newspaper called them, were tolerable to her only as she considered them subjectively, not objectively. In their midst, elbowed, pushed and jostled, about her every element that enters into a crowd in New York City, she had only to make her way to Broadway, and so on uptown by surface car to her hotel, and be free of them.

She did not. She turned and as best she could, crossed to that side of Fifth Avenue that bounds Madison Square.

Who has not felt the terror, and also the exultation, that come with a crowd? Who has not quailed before the sense of its power? At the comprehension of its sweep and sway that nothing can resist?

The park on Lucy's right, the sidewalk whereon she struggled to keep her footing, the street itself at this wide but congested point, were solid with the outpouring. A man with a swarthy skin and earrings was on one side of Lucy, two girls shrill and voluble were on the other. She was an atom, as were they, in a sea of atoms. For the crowd surged and flowed like the ocean. Its voice, gathering volume, was become tonal, deep, murmurous and booming, also like the ocean. It came on Lucy as she struggled to keep her feet, its breath about her, its shoulders crushing her, that any creature attempting to interfere with its present humor would be swept down and annihilated, trodden under without parley or hesitation.

She found herself thinking of the French Revolution; of the mob as it rushed on the Bastille; of the king and Marie Antoinette looking down on the howling populace from the balcony of the Tuileries. She thought of recent Petrograd and the revolution and the days before Kerensky; of the passion that will arise sooner or later in oppressed peoples everywhere. And seeing that the spirit of this surging crowd about her now was one of resistless uplift and exaltation, she thought on the power of *the idea,* to sway peoples for good or for bad according to its nature.

She thought of how blind and stupid are the rulers of the world, the politicians and the doddering statesmen, from the days of the pharaohs and before, to the present moment; and suddenly she saw that her question put to herself an hour ago as she sat at her luncheon in the club, was answered: *The peoples could speak, and were speaking, and their accent was unmistakable!*

Peace! Peace! This was what they said; speaking

from impassioned hearts, and out of depths of infinite desire. As with the tall and gaunt woman blowing her paper horn, it seemed to Lucy that her own soul arose at this moment, and trumpeted its exaltation.

Peoples unexploited *are* nonmilitant? Peoples free from compulsion *are* pacifist, ugly as recent usage has made the word? Their slow-mounting intention throughout this war *had* been a growing if inarticulate determination to *have* peace? Not peace for this particular present moment; but peace *forever!*

A consuming loneliness here seized her; a craving for human contact that overwhelmed her. She only was alone, amid this joyful multitude. Here was a bevy of voluble young working girls, there a marching group of youths, chanting as they went; here a crowd of men, there a man and woman. She gazed about her desperately. These people were right; it *was* a moment for human relations. She would go into the first Western Union office she came to, and send a wire to her mother-in-law and her little son; she would send one to Stephen's uncle and aunt; one to the parents of Bennie; one to 'Genie.

She wondered if demonstrations such as this about her, were taking place elsewhere around the world? In Paris? In London? In Rome? In Melbourne? In India? Were men singing, shouting, frankly weeping, as were these about her here in New York City, along the roads and on the battlefields of Europe? In France? In Italy? On the far fronts of Serbia? What was happening in Berlin? What had become of the Kaiser? Why in these recent official messages out of Germany was no mention made of him?

She now was abreast the Altar of Liberty. It was surrounded with people packed closely, and a man on

the rostrum was speaking. His lips moved, and he gesticulated violently. It came to Lucy afterward that she was within a dozen feet of him and did not hear a word, so submerged was all other sound in the murmurous volume of the whole.

An airplane passed, dipping and lifting, careening and circling, its white wings flashing in the sunlight, joy mad with the rest of the world. In the jostling of a thousand shoulders, and the upturning of a thousand faces to behold it, Lucy was thrust against a gun carriage supporting a gun, one of a pair that flanked the altar. Held here in an eddy while the crowd at large flowed by, her eyes followed the words on a placard hanging from the bronze barrel. It was a captured German 77-millimeter cannon. She caught her breath, and her gloved finger shudderingly touched the smooth surface. Cast in the breech below an Imperial crown and the monogram W.I. were the words *Ultima Ratio Regnum.*

" 'The last argument of kings'?" A voice spoke across the barrel.

Lucy looked up sharply, having inherited from her grandmother a theory that a woman's self when decent, is her only needed protection; and the severity of her features gave way to eager recognition.

"Eugene Lelewel!"

His hair as ingenuously flaxen as a newly fledged duckling's down, his blue eyes paradoxically keen, he was smiling as he looked, now at the gun, now at her. His soft hat was in his hand, and he wore excellent clothes.

She touched his sleeve across the gun arraigningly. "What is the message you have for me from my hus-

band? Why have you let me wait since the night you saw me?"

He lifted his brows and also his shoulders, then let them drop together. For all the naïve quality of his absurd hair, this man was entirely sure of himself, carrying himself with a careless freedom, and smiling with the easy, the amused detachment of one satisfied with his position.

When Lucy saw him last in Kentucky, on a Sunday afternoon at Ashe, he was no less sure of his opinions, his jaw was no less set. But the air of him then was passive, as with one prepared to wait; whereas the every aspect of him now bespoke elation.

He answered smilingly. "My message for you got through to Lyda, then? I didn't know. I reckoned on a possible one in half a dozen letters I might send, getting past the censor."

She stared, as light broke upon her. "The voice speaking to me both times over the telephone was your little Andrey? No, I didn't know. I had not thought of your wife and boy as being all this while in Louisville, though I don't know why."

It was his turn to look his surprise. "Lyda had the *boy* speak to you? Wouldn't do it herself?"

He laughed. "It's like her. How she hated you, for yourself which she resented, and for that for which you stand."

He spoke reminiscently, looking away into the crowd. "I married Lyda when she was eighteen. She is of Russian parentage and birth, but raised in America. My mistake. She had breathed the air of your America, which is bad for all women. She is like the rest of you American women, she demands all of life

in return for nothing, an egotist, self-absorbed and resentful. Out of her public school education, a glorious testifying this, she knows just two things; she doesn't want to be a workingman's wife, and she does want to be, and to have, what you more privileged women are, and have."

He talked to keep away from her question; Lucy saw this. "What is it you have to tell me?"

"You have it; it reached you in my messages."

"Is my husband alive?"

"He was eighteen months ago, when I saw and talked with him."

He turned at this, because of the quick exhaling of her breath, and looked at her as she stood on her side of the captured 77-millimeter gun, her two hands on the barrel, as if to support herself. She would not be whiter of brow, of cheeks, of lips, had a splinter from a shell projected from the smooth bore of the machine driven through her heart.

He remembered this Mrs. Stephen Janvier, then Miss Wing, as interesting, and capable of piquing the mind with curiosity concerning her. He long had told himself that to the foreigner when he is informed at all, the young American girl is as crudely uninformed as she is voluble and egotistical. He had found this girl sensible, with a cool intelligence, not one to be taken in, but rather to appraise for herself, and value.

As for Lucy as she leaned there, braced against the German cannon, it was joy that was killing her; the sudden certainty that the messages were authentic; were authorized; that Stephen subsequent to his officially reported disappearance, was alive. In the moment's too sudden relief, she seemed to learn what it would mean to die.

"I think," she spoke slowly, and with visible effort, "if you'll get me through the crowd, I'll ask you to take a cab with me to my hotel. We can better talk of these things there."

He looked at her with concern; then a shrug followed. "I'll get you to Fourth Avenue and a surface car, probably the best we can do. I doubt if there's a taxicab to be had at this minute in all New York. Can you see the ladies on the platform behind the present speaker? I'm their immediate property, you see; and while it's palpably futile to continue their program, I'm due to speak for them in about five minutes. I can, and will, join you at your hotel within an hour."

She remembered at this, the Liberty Loan now an accomplished fact, the drive for the United War Work was begun! But what had Eugene Lelewel to do with it? Four years ago he was the avowed enemy of society as at present organized. She looked at the ladies designated. Two were middle-aged, alertly distraught as far as any attention to their present speaker went; eyes roving; the typical committee women, in mind putting over the date next ahead; the third was Peggy Tewksbury!

Eugene had come around from his side of the gun, and here led the way, not forward along the sidewalk, but out to the curb. Lucy followed.

Two great streams moved along the asphalt, one uptown and one down, opposing rivers of humanity. Not a vehicle was to be seen. From the direction of Broadway came the crashing of a band, the first to be heard.

He stepped from the curb, and she followed, seeing that his purpose was to join with the uptown stream, and make his way with her to a cross street.

A group of sailor boys in blue, and youthful soldiers

in khaki, swept by, part of the on-surging stream, a sailor boy at their head with a broom for a baton, the others in his train gloriously busy with tin flutes and toy drums. An olive-skinned boy bumped into Lucy as he passed her, holding aloft a banner made of heavy paper and lettered boldly, "Sholem—Peace."

Following the Jewish lad, and like him, passing Lucy, came a phalanx of middle-aged Negro women, bareheaded, with sweeping skirts and mighty strides, forming a hollow square about a service flag dotted with stars, a star of gold in the margin. Of these women one was singing as she passed Lucy, an older person with grizzled hair, her eyes stern and her head up, a band of black upon her sleeve. The words as she passed, came back to Lucy:

"Praise Him all creatures he-e-re be-e-lo-ow!"

Lucy, in the wake of Eugene, glanced toward the park. Above the heads, old Farragut in enduring bronze, on his pedestal, clear-eyed and indomitable, far-gazed over the sea of humanity, his eyes those of the master of his craft, who sees port ahead.

Stable and fixed; a rock in a beating, surging sea; what did old Farragut see? Was it a federation of nations to be tried out, acceptable and established? A world federation as enduring as the federation of States that he fought grimly and so well to preserve?

Farragut! Whose blockade of the Mississippi River preceded the siege by water and by land of Vicksburg; the while in that beleagured and bombarded city, a southern woman, gently and luxuriously reared, gave premature birth to a daughter; this daughter, herself to-day the mother of an officer-son in khaki, the wife of Mr. Stephen Janvier, the elder.

Unspeakably and unpardonably cruel, the story hith-

erto seemed to Lucy in the telling; the terrified young mother in her travail; the impoverished household; the near-by enemy, one in blood and tradition. To-day amid these rejoicing throngs in the streets of New York, the lesser evil seemed forever swallowed in the greater good! Old Farragut's task was appointed him: *The Union must and shall be preserved! The Union was preserved!* To-day he gazed above the heads of the turbulent people, the seer who sees on the horizon the rays of a coming day's greater federation!

Eugene and Lucy came to their cross street, and made their way toward Fourth Avenue. He seemed infinitely diverted by what he saw about him.

"Peace!" His nose with its rippling contour, twitched with his silent laughter. "Is it possible," he said to her, "that these people with the history of Europe open to them, really believe in it? Granted the armistice, and granted a peace conference supposed to represent them. What then? What will the outcome of a European peace always be? What has it always been, as delegated to the diplomats and rulers? Compromise; expediency; sacrifice of principles; resulting in the intensifying of old, and the creating of new bitternesses."

He saw a passing empty taxicab after all, and signaled it, putting Lucy in it, himself talking the while.

"The past generations of peoples have bowed their heads, and submitted to these things. The present peoples of the world are in a humor to rise and, resistless, sweep aside diplomacy and compromise, seeing in these evils the prolific breeders of all their past and present troubles."

CHAPTER XXVII

LELEWEL kept his word, and was shown up to Lucy's sitting room something before four o'clock. Ellen sat just within the open door of the adjoining bedroom, stoically mending some freshly-delivered laundry. Fifty-odd years' training in the school of service to Mrs. Wing, that arch-autocrat-democrat, had not divorced her from her private way of thinking. Her scorn of the visitor just arrived was unconcealed.

Lucy motioned him to a chair, and herself sat on a sofa from where she saw her companion's face with the light from the window upon it. If, as she felt an hour since, he was keeping something from her, she would make sure of this fact. She wasted no time in preliminaries.

"The last message to me also is true, then? Some prisoners escaped, or meaning to escape out of Germany, have some word from my husband for me?"

"One of these men, separated from the others before they got to Ghent, eventually reached Stockholm where I met him, and told me so."

"When?"

"Six weeks ago."

"We'll come back to this. Tell me, when and where it was *you* saw Stephen?"

"At the German prison camp at Dulmen. Later, I learn, he was sent to Termonde. I was a prisoner at

Dulmen when he came there. We were together four weeks."

"Came from where?"

"His first and temporary prison camp. He described it as an old cavalry stable with moldy straw on a cement floor for beds. I suppose the trouble really began there."

"What trouble?"

"Infection in his wounds."

"What wounds?"

He looked at her. He had no objection to the fashion of her questions which came curt and sharp. He was thinking that she was paler, under scrutiny, than he found her an hour ago. These months past had worked havoc with her bloom and her youth.

"You're good for all this?"

She nodded. "The unkind thing is not to tell me."

Nevertheless he was nervous, and as she was aware, avoided her eyes. She pushed a tray of cigarettes and matches toward him, but he shook his head, produced paper and tobacco, and rolled his own. Andrey, the son, had the same long, oddly wise face, the same downy-white hair; in the child's case, however, the expression was grave, not keen, and the hair was dull. Stephen once said Eugene was a coming man, or a force perverted.

He lighted his cigarette, and looking ahead of him through half-closed eyes, resumed: "As I remember the story as he told it to me, on the day in question Lieut. Janvier's machine brought up the rear of the formation of the patrol. His especial job was to guard the tail of the flight. His plane was hit by a Fokker type of Hun plane at a height of 3,000 feet. He believed death inevitable, and switched off his

motor to prevent being burned in the plane. He dropped, and when his plane crashed to the ground inside the enemy lines, he crawled out alive, with a shoulder broken in three places, a smashed ankle, and many bruises. Temporary medical attention was given him, he told me, and he was started back toward a hospital prison camp. In this way he came to us at Dulmen."

He stopped. "I don't want to seem unwilling, but hadn't I better defer this?"

She shook her head. If she could have spoken, she would have said to give her a moment's time and she would be herself. With his words there had followed for her an interval of anguish, the sort of suffering which tightens the heart, and produces a feeling of physical helplessness. A shivering ran over her, a loneliness akin to nostalgia seized her. She felt if she could not reach Stephen, she would die; to ease and cherish him; to cradle him against her bosom; to stay and respite him; pouring out her love and her yearning in passionate ministration.

But immediately she was herself again, outwardly at least, curt, controlled and definite. Again she pushed the tray of tobacco and matches to him. "Tell me about this camp. This Dulmen. Why were you there? I thought you went back to Russia?"

"I was a Russian prisoner. Dulmen originally was an all-Russian prison camp. Later every nationality then represented in the allies was there, English, Russian, French, Belgian, Colonial. Each nationality was fenced off behind its three lines of wire; the first line of the entanglement with all its points on; the second of plain wire; the third line of square mesh, and said to be electrified. The sentries were between the first

and second wires, and there were sentry boxes at intervals outside the third wire."

He seemed to talk to no seen end; if he really was avoiding the issue, she would bring him to it in time.

"Inside these inclosures were our barracks; these were buildings of unpainted wood, like one-story barns, each housing from seventy-five to one hundred prisoners. For sleeping there were three rows of shelves around the walls, bunked off and filled with straw. Each barrack had its galley for cooking. There were tubs for soup, and tubs for what was called coffee. Each man dipped his portion, being provided with a plate, cup, and spoon. A general office and administration building stood in the center of the camp. Three machine guns were mounted on the top of this building, facing in different directions, three sentries on guard day and night."

He laughed, the really mirthful laugh that was characteristic. "It's the old story of civilization repeated, the incredibly many held by the few. Tens of hundreds herded Samsons were there. All my life I have seen a picture in my mind: The blinded peoples, bound with fetters of brass, pausing as they grind in the prison house, and lifting their heads as at last they sense their power! What matter who of us are borne down in the fall of the temple, so the Philistines die? So long as the people bow themselves with all their might and the house fall upon the lords of the world? Then shall we of them who are left, set about building up the new structure. Shall I tell you about the prison bread?"

She nodded. She again was fighting that anguish returned upon her, and could not speak.

"A so-called portion was a slice about five inches

in diameter and one inch thick. It was glossy, wet and dark, the bottom crust resembling gelatin, and it smelt like sour earth. Rations came through to many of the French and English prisoners, and they were generous with their less fortunate companions. I have come on worse food in my time, however, where we of the exploited masses were just as helpless. I take it you've never been in the fo'castle of a merchant marine? Almost any country. No?"

Again he laughed. "Ever looked into conditions in a mining town, company housing, and stores?"

He rolled another cigarette. "Shall I tell you of the prison garb? Yes? Though for the most we were nondescript, anything obtainable sufficing. At Dulmen at the start, I wore long pants, jet-black in color, of a cotton material. Down the side of each leg ran a yellow band, inserted in such fashion that if ripped and removed, a gap was left and the garment fell apart. The left sleeve of the black blouse, cut military fashion, had a similar inserted band of yellow, two inches wide. The blouse buttoned down the front, and had no pockets. With this I also wore a little round hat like a bell-hop's, a little higher perhaps, through which ran a yellow band woven in, in similar fashion."

She held herself in hand with superhuman determination. "Tell me how you and my husband met at Dulmen?"

"It's a bit of a story. So far as I know, Lieut. Janvier was our first American prisoner, though others came later. Though serving with the French, he was placed in the English camp. We'll have to go back a bit in my story. After the first big Russian defeat and rout by Hindenburg, the German prison camps

were crowded with Russian prisoners, numbered by the hundreds of thousands. Cholera broke out among these prisoners. The German medical staff failed to stem it, and Russia was asked by the Prussian government in the name of humanity, though in reality to protect Germany, to send her own medical men, promising they would be returned when the scourge was checked.

"These men came, the most of them volunteers for the service. They controlled the cholera, but Germany did not return them. She held them for use in her prison camps generally, among these the camp at Dulmen. I, a prisoner at Dulmen in the hospital wards, in time became an orderly, and was permitted to go about with Pavel Sergueyevna, Dr. Sergueyevna from Petrograd, because he grew used to me, and found me handy. A surgeon in the various camps at Dulmen, he was rough, severe, but effectual. He reset Lieut. Janvier's fractures, after ten days' neglect along the way, reduced his fever, and at the time pulled him through. I was slavey to Pavel Sergueyevna as I said, made the daily rounds with him, and so came in contact with the patients in the several hospital camps. You have the story."

Lucy knew that she for her needs did not have the story. She knew that this man, whom she at first meeting four years and more ago, had regarded inquisitively and condescendingly, could more nearly give her what she wanted to know than any other creature in the world at this instant. She longed for the courage to cry aloud her question, to let this panting need show itself if must be, bare and naked. She wanted to say to Eugene, "Did my husband speak of me? Has he need of me? Have you no pledge for me that he thinks of me?"

But because the human soul is decent in its reticences, she spoke quietly, with every show of calmness. "Tell me of Stephen? Tell me how he looked? And how he really seemed to you?"

"Anything I say is many months old, Mrs. Janvier. Four weeks after he came I was removed to another camp. When I left he looked fairly fit for a man coming through an infected wound. One recollection I have is finding him propped up on a bench, his plastered leg outstretched before him, trying to see what he could stir up. He had a mouth organ he had borrowed, and with his one good hand and arm was teaching ragtime to an Oxford boy on crutches who had borrowed another, while the rest of the hospital ward howled for mercy."

Ellen in the next room looked up. When the moment came that she judged fit, she would speak, and send this one-time brewery hand about his business. Twice her watchful eyes had seen Lucy's hand secretly press her heart.

Lucy was speaking. "How often during these four weeks did you see Lieut. Janvier? And when you saw him, about what did you and he talk?"

"I saw him always once a day. As he grew better, we talked of old things and new, stubborn each, as of old. He spoke of you, telling me of his marriage, and of the son he had not yet seen. We agreed that in the event either got out of Germany, that one would get word to the wife and the family of the other. I labored under the handicap of returning to Russia when I did get away. But my endeavors were sincere."

"I thought every prisoner in Germany has the right to get his name and address through to the appointed channels for relief and notification?"

"In general, yes; since no prisoner in a German prison is adequately fed except when food is supplied him from allied sources. In the most of the camps that I saw, the trouble seemed not so much the system, but the commandant in charge. He may be as decent as a jailer may be, or he may be as brutal as he pleases. It's a question of arbitrary power, and the same criticism applies to any military system anywhere, in every branch of its service. At this particular moment at Dulmen things were bad, especially for the one American prisoner."

"Why for the American?"

"It's a story again. Dulmen and Louisville, Kentucky, would seem a ways apart; they proved surprisingly knit together."

He looked up with a flash of a smile. "Let me tell you a little story while the main story waits. When the Russian from my part of Russia wants to convey an idea of the interdependence of man on his fellow creatures, he tells the story of Ivan Ivanich at his great desk, setting down wisdom in a mighty book that no one ever opened.

" 'Ekaterina Ivanova,' Ivan called to his wife at her duties, 'is it you who shakes the floor?'

" 'Not me, my master; it is Lin Tew the weaver, who walks heavily at his task in China.'

" 'Ekaterina Ivanova, is our window unlatched that the cold comes in?'

" 'Not our window, my husband; Jan of Iceland has forgotten to drop the reindeer skin behind him as he went out his door.'

" 'Ekaterina Ivanovna, do I hear you sob?'

" 'Not me, Ivan Ivanich; it is the mother whose child was swept away in the flooded Ganges.' "

Lucy looked at Eugene who still smiled. "You mean just what?"

"I mean this. The first American prisoner in a camp like Dulmen did not escape general notoriety. Germany was counting on the neutrality of the United States. This American prisoner was a marked man."

Eugene drew breath. "In the eyes of the commandant of the Dulmen prison camp, Louisville, Kentucky, for entirely another reason stood for affront, for grievance. This commandant's sister, a widow in East Prussia, had a daughter married out of her junker class. This daughter's husband, whose name was Weimar, was a lieutenant in a highly desirable regiment however; and the means by which he had arrived there, and by which he maintained his position there, came from Louisville, Kentucky."

Eugene flashed a quick smile at Lucy. "You catch the connection? This aid came from old Weimar out of his brewery-made millions; for the gratification to himself, and his sister living in Louisville also, he sponsored his nephew, the son of a brother left behind him in the fatherland."

Again Eugene smiled. "I myself had these things from Pavel Sergueyevna, who of an evening often sat smoking with the commandant. Pavel Sergueyevna had his rough humor. That I should have lived in Louisville, Kentucky, a foreman in the brewery of old Weimar; and that the first and only American prisoner in the Dulmen camp should be from Louisville, Kentucky, and have served as a legal adviser to old Weimar, tickled him supremely.

"For Pavel Sergueyevna regarded the heavily-built and overfed elderly commandant as a fool and a bore,

a present cross of necessity to be borne with. And this commandant was sore in his peace of mind, and apprehensive of an appeal to his pocket. The American source of supply for his Junker sister's lieutenant-son-in-law, was dammed; and nothing more forthcoming. The four sons and the two daughters of old Weimar apparently felt no impulse to support the fatherland. At the start of the war, and before the United States came in, the oldest son wrote that they had carried their father with them in their stand, and revenues to the lieutenant-nephew came no more. Your husband, I am sure, in himself gave no offense. That his letters suffered vicariously as a vent to spleen, I feel fairly sure."

The nostrils of the girl quivered. He saw that she tried, and could not speak. He off-flung a further word lightly. "It helps considerably among the run of prisoners, to find that men good as you and better, are subject to this sort of thing. I should say it keeps up the morale tremendously."

She felt that she could if ever she had to, forgive the man much because of this speech. She looked at him gratefully. "Tell me how he was when you left him; how he seemed; what he was doing when you saw him last?"

"Convalescing; praying God to send him a razor, before he quite grew a Barbarossa's beard. He was moving around cautiously on a crutch, one foot and ankle, and a shoulder, still in plaster; and was heckling a bank-clerk Tommy Atkins, shortly before come up for a commission and still heady with the ascent. Coaxing him in his eye bandage to desist from twitting Sandy Macpherson of Glasgow who sported a sling,

for the bur-r-r upon his tongue; and himself stand up like a Briton and say, *High heaven-aspiring hoary-headed Himalayas.*"

Ellen laid down her mending and came in. Lucy had turned about as she sat, and with her face against the stiff pillow roll, was sobbing quietly. It was as if Stephen were given back to her in all his honesty and sane humor; his optimism; his healthy and infectious vitality.

CHAPTER XXVIII

WARRINGTON had telephoned during the afternoon and asked Lucy to dine with him in celebration of the great news. When he was announced at seven, Ellen asked him to come to Mrs. Janvier's parlor.

He arrived speedily, a short, heavy figure swinging on a crutch which thrust one shoulder high. His eyes swept the room for Lucy promptly.

She was standing at a window that looked down on the avenue, and turned as he came in.

Oh, the once young, glowing, pretty love of his life! He was across the room in two great swings of his body and beside her. She was crying, too grief-absorbed to care, or perhaps to know; for the tears lay wet and unregarded on her cheeks.

He loved her when in the eyes of the world, for him to love this woman was a sin. Doubtless human creatures should not be like this, but they are.

He looked her up and down. "I see you're not ready to go with me? Where's your hat? What's the idea? You're not up to it? You know the news is fake, of course?"

She nodded. "Eugene Lelewel told me. He left half an hour ago."

The astounded look in Warrington's close-set, small blue eyes, was lively with amazement. "What in the

name of high heaven, Lucy, do you know of Eugene Lelewel?"

"Why do you speak in that tone? I pointed him out to you at the Metropolitan Opera House the evening I got here to New York, the workingman I said was from Louisville; and I told you later the story of my knowing him."

"Certainly you may have pointed to some one, and certainly you told me of your workingman acquaintance; but you did not mention any name."

He put out his hand and detached her fingers that grasped the curtain. "Come to the sofa, and sit down beside me."

She obeyed him as she always did, without demur or question, submitting herself to him with a dependence that oftentimes stirred him to the soul. How poignantly lovely to him she was; the thin fine nose; the tired mouth; the wearily relaxed body. His face that in its every big and homely feature was the replica of his great-aunt, Mrs. Tewksbury, bent a look upon her with more than its usual modicum of concern. She had a way of raising her eyes to his when she listened, and also when she asked a question. He could sit and contemplate her forever.

"This seems a strange and sinister association for you, my dear. Eugene Lelewel, better known as Anton Prill, radical and propagandist, is one of the best known of the Internationales. I've been coming on articles of his in this foreign review, and that, for ten years. I've heard it said that he writes with facility in half a dozen languages. He's only just back in this country from Russia, and I hear speaks openly of the months of work he put in in the prison camps in Germany,

converting or corrupting, as you prefer to call it, Russian prisoners over to Bolshevism, through German connivance, and with German approval. And incidentally, so I hear he claims, corrupting the German soldier. The A. P. L.—American Protective League—have his name on their list, and the Department of Justice ought to have it, if it hasn't. That men such as he, making no secret of their activities, get in and out of this country as they are doing, makes the loyal American sit up and nurse his suspicions anxiously; the newspaper man with his superior opportunities for knowing, a little more anxiously than most. Now tell me what you know through Eugene Lelewel-Prill, you astounding young person!"

He listened to her story, as given to her by Eugene an hour ago. He listened, as always, well. It was said of him in his reportorial days, that whatever the case he had to cover he never took a note, being shy a hand on account of the crutch; and never came back to his office with a point uncovered.

At the close of her story she remembered a forgotten incident. "When I came on him to-day in Madison Square, he was waiting his turn, a speaker for your cousin, Peggy Tewksbury, and her U. W. W. committee."

"Peggy and Anton Prill-Lelewel! In the name of Big Business and Capital, written with capital letters, and Red-Handed Anarchy spelled with the same!"

With his lips pursed he considered her. Then as suddenly he laughed. It was well in any event to carry her thoughts with him, away from their present anguished centering. A moment since as she talked, he had put out a hand, immeasurably strong hands his

were, bony, blunt-fingered and hairy, and touched hers that tightly clasped lay in her lap. As he had divined, hers were icy-cold and quivering.

He smiled now as he talked. "Myself, I like cool-headedness, and value a certain sort of calculation. I'm fond of Peggy. The outcome of several generations of begetters and also conservers of big wealth, she for so young a person is the epitome of calm common sense. A story this briskly able young person told me a few evenings since, comes back to me in the light of your sequel.

" 'I'm pledged,' Peggy told me, 'to furnish so many speakers for this U. W. W. campaign, for so many days. I'd heard that the propounders of the doubtful creeds can talk all around the orthodox; so I went the other night to an advertised open forum at a certain center of radicalism, and frankly, their speakers do. I rounded up several of 'em in the rear of the hall as they were leaving, told 'em who I was, and put my proposition to 'em. "I'm asking for volunteers," I told 'em; "you to talk the dollars out the pockets of a well-nigh weary public, by dwelling on the horrors of war, and I to be present, to see you delete the *creeds*. At this moment of conservation of *all* resources, I'm sure you'll agree?" And agree they did, two of 'em, men, as highly amused as I could wish 'em, at the entire pleasantry of the affair.' "

* * * * * *

An hour later Warrington returned with Lucy along the sidewalk from the near-by chosen restaurant, and dinner. She looked at the shifting, surging flow of people; he looked at her, the white keen light from the street's brilliancy on her face. She talked.

"The crowds here on the streets are right, War-

rington; they know the news of an armistice is only premature. Of course, like you, I see that much of to-night's excess is license, and would be riot if it quite dared. But, Warrington, I saw the best in human nature to-day. Earlier to-day I experienced the real thing. Grandmother made mock of the people. Democrat in theory, she had very little faith in the popular wisdom. To-day I disagreed with her! To-day I saw the people swayed by a constructive idea; an idea of a *new* peace, which they believe is to be for the good of society. It reversed the mob idea for me, a something which overthrows and destroys. Will they be stable, and remember what they saw in vision to-day? Can they be trusted to see to-morrow, what they grasped to-day?"

They turned the corner, the entrance to Lucy's hotel almost at hand; about them the flag-hung façades, the glittering shop windows, and the crowds that this day and evening, no man sought to control. A vast circle of people, visibly edified, blocked Fifth Avenue at this point from curb to curb, gathered about some central attraction. Lucy stopped short.

"Warrington, be good to me. I must see what this is about. No creature to-day has reacted to this moment as I have. I *love* these people!"

He scowled fearsomely, and with amusement, as he regarded her.

"Go to it, young 'un. Subdue yourself to the dye you now desire to work in. I'll follow you if I can."

He did more; he made a way for her. No vehicles as yet had found their way back to the avenue, and the crowd before them was dense. It broke however; as was said before, a crowd always broke for Warrington with his crutch, and his quick, penetrating look about

him as he proceeded. Through the lane that opened, the two made their way to the front line.

The space within the encircling crowd was clear; the asphalt smooth and gleaming in the arc light. Overhead banners billowed, snapped and floated. The eyes of the craning circle were upon two figures. The one was a tiny, oh, so wee and puckered-cheeked old, old woman, in short skirts and apron, a shawl pinned about her head, one gray lock astray and bobbing; she a-smile, her bright black eyes wandering, as she ground away at a diminutive hand organ.

> Malbrough, the prince of commanders,
> Has gone to the war in Flanders,

growled Warrington, deep in his throat, supplying the words to her strains.

The other figure was a dancing sailor; a visibly foreign, red-headed sailor, with a nose that at some time in his past was bashed in; not a person who ever would be hung for his prepossessing looks, but unrestrained and abandoned, a supple-jack, jubilant-mad, one took it, with the rest of the world.

His arms folded high on his dark blue blouse, an oh-boy-watch-me-if-you-will invitation on his face, past-telling infectious, he hornpiped to the grinding of Malbrough by the little old woman, after some fashion of his own.

Footing it forward and back; plunging to the right, and to the left, his head ducked now to this side, now to that as he lunged; stamping, jigging, rocking, right foot to the fore, now the left; leaping, twirling, uttering small quick staccato cries; footing it as human foot never danced more madly since faun and human creature within one body dwelt together. At moments in-

deed the featness transcended itself, and at such exhibitions of surpassing dexterity, the crowd howled its glee.

"Warrington!"

It was Lucy who spoke sharply, and with abruptness.

For the sailor—the objective center of these thousand pairs of eyes—suddenly unfolded his arms, and without ceasing to dance, his feet indeed slapping and stamping on the asphalt with even greater fury, fumbled for a second in his blouse. Jerking forth an object, he shook it free, and tossed it unfurled high in the air above his head. As the thousand pairs of eyes that followed the parabola described by this object before its descent, grasped not only that it was a flag, but that the flag was *red,* the dance ended with abruptness, and the sailor plunged into the crowd, his head lunged forward, and disappeared.

* * * * * *

Warrington made his way onward from Lucy's hotel, speculating on the chance by and by of seeing a cab that would return him to his newspaper office. Individuals in the crowds had dug up cowbells, rattles, horns, and other noise-producers associated with election night and New Year's Eve, and the din as these passed arose to heaven. Men in uniform, and boys in sailor blue, were set upon by giggling, shrieking girls, and kissed and hugged, as they made their embarrassed ways through the throngs. Curbstone peddlers thrust flags singly, and in bunches, into the faces of the passers-by. It was no longer the heartfelt and profound unloosing of the emotions that the afternoon had witnessed.

"The lid went off," Warrington told himself, "and it's still climbing. The world from east to west, and

from pole to pole, shouted with one voice to-day, it seems, when like day to the sun-worshipers of Inca awaiting on their knees, peace appeared."

His way took him past his quarters, that were not far from his newspaper office. He loved his rooms. Lucy had come to him here more than once with Mrs. Wing, for tea, and also to dine.

He thought of her now. He was aware as to how he appeared to her. She thought of him, sweetly and happily, as one of those who early know and find what they want. He seemed to her one of the to-be-envied persons. She reckoned him as stable and content, finding his needs in his work, and his profession.

CHAPTER XXIX

THE day before Warrington left New York for Paris, Lucy returned to Ashe. Eugene had dropped from sight. Warrington, if any, had ways by which to reach him in New York City if he meant to be reached. From the day he and Lucy met in the crowd in Madison Square, she neither saw nor heard from him. Events following the true armistice, and preceding Warrington's going, had moved with incredible swiftness; each day with its news brought Lucy its own peculiar nature of suspense, and therefore suffering. The newspapers gave specific statements:

> American prisoners released by the Germans are making their way singly and in pairs across the line at various points. The American Army has established stations at various points along the American sector of occupation where prisoners can be received and cared for as they arrive.

Ellen Jackson was the factor at the last, that hurried their return. The winter preceding the draft, and the call of Julius Buck, her nephew, to the service, he married pretty Sally Dick, the daughter of the carpenter. Their child now was eighteen months old, and Ellen after her own undemonstrative fashion, had given her heart to it. Word came to her in New York that Sally was ill of the prevailing influenza. Julius

was overseas, and the father of the motherless Sally, with whom she lived, was an elderly man. Lucy hastened their return at Ellen's request, by two days.

Met at the station by Helen and little Stephen, Lucy fell upon the neck of her mother-in-law, kissing her passionately. They walked home in the cheering sunshine of the frosty day, Lucy holding her son by his clinging hand.

"We will hope, we will hope," she told Helen gayly, "until there is no need longer to hope."

'Genie was spending the day at the parsonage, and in the afternoon came over to welcome Lucy. She brought forth to view a letter with a little jerk.

"Don't you just naturally love our post office service? Hasn't it done all it superhumanly can to soften the asperities of war? Bennie was killed in September. Yesterday brought me a letter from him written to me in August. Oh, my God! Lucy! Bennie's dead and in his grave! And yet he's here! Here!" She smote the envelope in her hand fiercely.

"He's here with all his drollness, his absurdity. He says that he, the day before, was walking down the Champs Elysées, a buck on leave, when whom did he meet but William McKinley Coffin from right here at home, a twirling swagger stick in his hand! I'll read it to you, as Bennie tells it:

Said I to him, "Oh, boy, but aren't you wishing you were home this day, son?"

But William wouldn't have it. He said that he in his off hours was soft-shoe-and-clog dancing for the A. E. F. It was evident that he felt he was appreciated. I asked him a second question:

"Oh, you Black Death, what do you know of Julius Buck?"

His answer implied that Julius likewise was where he would be. Said William:

"Off hours, he's the banjo-king of jazz-band players, in every sort of show a hut pulls off. At other times he's one of five kettledrummers, 369th Regiment, Lieut. James Europe, Bandmaster, yes, sir!"

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The next day pretty Sally died. Ellen and Jerry brought the child home with them for the time being, where installed in Jerry's cottage on the back of the place, the two with the aid of a half-grown Negro girl, looked after it. A likely little fellow, he was named for Julius; a crowing café-au-lait baby, bright-eyed and irresistible, that aroused smiles and good humor in the beholder. It resulted in his spending all his waking hours under Lucy's roof.

* * * * * *

There were other happenings here at home to catch and hold the thoughts of Lucy. Emily Gwynne, as it were overnight, became Mrs. Tecumseh Craig. The Colonel was eighty on his recently passed birthday.

McHenry Stuart, perhaps by virtue of his service overseas, found Betty Craig more amenable to his suit on his return, and married her before she could change her mind. Betty was the cousin of Colonel Tecumseh, as she was of Helen Janvier and Stephen.

It revived old stories, tales of Emily Gwynne's hopeless infatuation. The outcome of this was that Grayson Gwynne, himself so poor a parent, overheard at the club and elsewhere, remarks that revealed to what extent Emily in the past had been imprudent and unwise.

He went home to his boarding house, and in his wrath and fury turned on Emily. She in her turn

walked out of the house, and went as always in her troubles, to Colonel Te. The next day in the boarding house parlor, witnessed by Grayson Gwynne and a few others, Emily became Mrs. Tecumseh Craig.

Said 'Genie to Lucy, having come out to Ashe to talk over the amazing and incredible thing, "If I live to get to Heaven where, I hope, a record of the deeds of foolish old men, tribal survivals of a vanished sentimental era, are kept, along with those of merely good and bad people; I want to find out what these two male widows of Windsor, Colonel Te and Emily's father, said to her to break her spirit further, apathetic and indifferent as this already was, and bring her to it. What at the most was there to admit that her father after catechizing her, damned her? That she got back on a time at three in the morning from joy-riding alone with McHenry, and her father's world got hold of it. And that his world got hold of it when she on another occasion, went alone to McHenry's rooms. The rest of us do the first at pleasure, and think no more about it. And if it came to where it was necessary to go to his rooms to have it out with a man who'd lied to me, I and any of my crowd would do the last! except that we'd then go away and *brag our fill* about it. And in that last clause of mine, note you, Lucy, lies the whole point. Emily acts according to her day; then her courage succumbs, and she judges what she's done by the creeds these two old Poloniuses who've brought her up, impose on her. Remember when several years ago, she wanted to earn her living? And the violence, and the vituperation of the two? Piteous and helpless winged creature, that's what she's been; caught in the web of a wicked and false past, spun for her by these two antediluvian old spiders!"

Said Helen Janvier on the subject, speaking to Lucy: "What Cousin Tecumseh lives on, nobody knows. And the Gwynnes haven't a cent. Said Cousin Te to me, as I accompanied him to the boarding house and the wedding, 'Of McHenry's dastardly part in this, I have nothing to say. The defection of my kinswoman, Bettie, however, lays this act of restitution on me, the still honorable head, I hope, Helen, of the clan.' "

Helen's smile was mixed. "Except that it's really happened, and here in our midst, Lucy, who among us would believe it? A modern poor broken Dulcinea, and two mad Don Quixotes, these old men, with not a modicum of everyday sense between them."

* * * * * *

Lucy had a duty, to her more pressing than any. When she thought of Lyda Lelewel, her heart became cold and stern within her, and she was determined to see her. Anne Janvier accompanied her, and while Lucy went in, waited for her in the car. Anne was thinner and darker these days. Lucy divined it was through grief for Stephen, and the knowledge drew the two together.

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Lucy and Lyda faced one another across the small room. Andrey, a boy of thirteen now, stood backed against the window, his fingers holding to the sill behind him. He looked from the one to the other of them not unfearfully.

Through an open doorway was a bed unmade, though it was the middle of the afternoon; on a table seen through another doorway were unwashed dishes and broken food; a comb and brush were on the parlor table here at hand, and beside the sofa on the floor

were slippers and a pair of stockings. A camisole lay on a chair.

Lyda was handsome. She was grown a shade fuller which, with her defiant bold statue, became her. Her earrings, long and swinging, still were with her; also still in her service were her powder and her rouge pot and her lipstick. Over a petticoat of changeable silk she wore a none too fresh silk kimono, drawn loosely about her.

She looked her visitor up and down. "If you've come here to ask me what I know about your husband, you've wasted your time. I don't know anything."

Lucy was destined to be unfortunate in her every point of contact with this wife of Eugene Lelewel; invariably to be stupid and blundering.

"I've come to tell you what I know about *your* husband, Mrs. Lelewel. I've seen him."

"I don't believe it; seen him where?"

"In New York City. You must know, Mrs. Lelewel, that he told me he has written to you; and in these letters to you, were messages for me. I owe you no thanks that I got these messages as I did!"

"*He* told *you?* That his letters to *me,* carried messages for *you?* Did *he* suggest you come here too, and tell me it's *you,* and not *me,* who's seen him?"

The further implication in Lucy's words reached her. "What do you mean? No thanks to me that you got those messages?"

Lucy had blundered, she saw this now; it was all hideously a mistake, her coming. She turned, believing it was better that she go before she implicated the boy further.

But he sprang toward her at this, and intercepted

her. His body as ever was overthin, and his flaxen hair still dull and heavy, but his face and his poignant eyes were passionate.

"I want you to know *I* spoke to you both those times over the telephone. Neither time did I have the letters; I told you the things my father wanted you to know as best I could remember them. I had to wait each time until I had a dime to pay for the call to you. Once I put my dime in; it clicked, and nobody answered. I had to wait a week until I had another."

Lyda turned on him, handsome and furious; this stab to her already galled and smarting pride was unexpected; her smoldering eyes blazed. She seized him by his thin shoulders, and flung him staggering across the floor.

He brought up, shaken but collected. He showed no resentment; his eyes traveled from Lucy to Lyda, and returned to Lucy. So might an adult plead for a child.

"Go; please, go. She'll feel bad about it after a while. But not now. Please, go."

And still Lucy delayed, looking from Lyda who stood sullen, breathing hard, to the boy. She had done all that she should not; she had set mother against child; she had betrayed Andrey's faith that put him in her hands. She was very unhappy; very troubled; very helpless.

"Good-by, Andrey. There's no debt I'll ever owe I shall feel as my debt to you. You have my love; don't forget that you have it; my gratitude; and my desire to express these. You know where I am. Call on me when you feel you can, or desire to."

* * * * * *

The boy was much on her mind. She longed to send

him such things as a boy would care for; but Helen who still was with her at Ashe dissuaded her, showing her that it would be unwise. Then came that which caused her to forget him.

It was one of those mild days that sometimes come in January; the bare trees soft against the blue sky; the landscape mildly tender.

Kitty McKane had returned, and was established for the time in the household. She, Lucy, Helen, and little Stephen were walking about the lawn, the child prowling beneath the chestnut tree for any salvage that might have been overlooked by himself and the squirrels.

The Stephen Janvier car appeared. Mr. Janvier, Anne, and Evelyn got out. A cable had come from Warrington Adams; and it had not come to Lucy, the wife, but to the uncle.

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Willy Simpson, the son of the butcher, a husky stripling now, came pedaling on his bicycle around the drive at something before seven o'clock the next morning, bringing as usual the morning paper to the door.

He glanced up, the furtive eyes of youth sweeping the front of the house, as if he expected it to look in some sense different. For since last evening Willy had the news. Before starting with his papers this morning, he read it afresh:

> JANVIER—Date of death unknown, Stephen Arnauld Janvier, in the prison camp of Termonde, Belgium.

CHAPTER XXX

IT long since was bedtime for the household, and the house was still. Lucy sat before a fitful fire in her bedroom. In her lap were some loose pages of cheap, poor paper. It had happened simply and naturally. Ellen and little Stephen came from the office with the afternoon's mail. With a letter from an English boy lately home from prison in Germany, were these pages that months before were intrusted to him by Stephen. The lad with a companion, a boy from Glasgow, came out by way of Ghent, escaped prisoners, and remained there until the armistice. A third in their party, a Russian, was separated from them on their way out.

Her face was quiet; if earlier she had shed tears, had gone down under the storm, this now was past. She had sorted the pages, there being one that was for her alone. She even smiled as she found and unfolded it anew, touching it with caressing fingers:

I wish this letter could reach you before I am gone, but this is not to be. As you read it think of me as with you. Assured that my arms are about you, look up that I may read assurance in your eyes.

I do not ask to read forgiveness; that were to undervalue your soul, and its grasp and understanding. Love, I know well, in all its abundance, I shall find. But one thing more show me, Lucy. Let me read in your eyes that you forgive me the harder task of the future that I who go before, leave to you left behind.

She was weeping again, quietly, making no effort to stay the tears as they rolled down her cheeks.

Be father for me, as well as in yourself mother, my darling, to our child. How will I in the final summing have failed to him, I wonder? How left unpaid to him, my debt of fatherhood?

There is time with us here in our prison camps for reflection in variety, Lucy. Will my son be able to read for himself in my actions as he will come to see them, intrinsic integrity of soul on my part?

I myself do not know. When I think of what I asked of you, of what I in person brought on you, I only can pray God and you, my darling, that you alike be merciful to me in your judgments of me.

Along one line I am convinced I am not wrong. Do not you permit your faith to fail you in the ultimate outcome, Lucy. The average people in every civilization have been the centers of safety and of progress. When these fail, the world fails. These average men and women wherever placed, seeing each to his personal integrity, to his individual honorable performance, the world must, and will, swing on.

Let me plead this on my part to seeming failures to other claims; the way for me to this individual honorable performance, this personal integrity, seemed in my eyes the one I followed to this, I admit, inglorious *cul-de-sac,* and futile end.

As to the women I have known best in my life; my mother; aunt Philippa; aunt Anne; Kitty; *you;* the least of these as I see now, has given me more than I appear to myself to have given in all. Oh, my darling——

And still she sat there. That the night was gone, and the pale gray of coming day appeared in her windows, concerned her not at all.

She thought of Stephen in the successive stages through which she knew him; Stephen in his exuber-

ance; in his amativeness; in his hour of decision; in his turning from her and life to an abhorrent business of legalized butcheries ending for himself in death. The test of an act comes after its completion.

She sat thinking. Was this act of Stephen's sound? What were its after results? Could she live by it? As we must and do live by and through great acts? A truly great act sheds light and soul-sustenance and vitality; being a spiritual sun to those who walk the earth. Had Stephen's act that summons to the living to surpass themselves, that is the abiding quality of the great act?

She thought of him as he was; the deep and sweet humor; the smiling patience; the whimsical contemplation, the tolerant attitude. She thought of her grandmother; she thought of Eugene Lelewel. Archtypes these two seemed now, of trends opposed to the position of Stephen. The one, her grandmother, was at war from start of life to its finish with the individual will that opposed itself to her own. The other, Eugene, was at war with society as its general will was opposed to his own. Was it that Stephen warred against those forces that were opposed to the will and to the best interests of the majority?

The letter from the English lad set forth that from the first, with the confinement and fare of prison life, there was little hope for Stephen. He was entirely practical, said the letter. He left no efforts untried to remedy his situation. These being done, said the letter quaintly, "he, like the bells in the belfries of Ghent on the day of the armistice, gave himself over among his mates to joyful *carillons*."

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Yes, Lucy saw it now. As Stephen's son, whom he had never seen, ran before his mother in the fields pursuing butterflies; so the older Stephen pursued joy. As her lover he had seized her by the hand, whose soul was overshadowed by many a doubt and question between it and the sun, and raced her with him to the hilltops of happiness as it were, and bade her look upon the world and see with God who made it, and not with man who mars it, that it is good.

And with this she suddenly cried out, and piteously: "Stephen!" she cried; "Stephen!"

So long as life shall continue for Lucy, ten years, twenty, fifty years to come, she will know that at this moment Stephen, her husband, bent over her and kissed her.

* * * * * *

The square of dim gray framed by each window in the room, paled. And still she sat there.

She was thinking of the succeeding thousands who are wretched; the ignorant, the overcrowded, the underfed; the diseased, the criminally abnormal, the prostituted, the exploited. She thought of these unfortunates the world around, in her own country, and elsewhere; and she asked herself if it is indeed because of the stability, the honorable individual endeavor, the integrity of the average many, that these things at whatsoever time in the world's history, have been, and will be made better?

Darest thou now, O Soul? So spoke some challenge within her.

And in the moment she seemed to know what she was for; seemed to rise to this challenge that she live; live on; surely, courageously, and endure; seemed conscious

of a thousand gleams within her soul like light irradiating tears; conscious of a thousand seeds of former faiths starting to life again. She and she alone was answerable; whether or not she furnish her part toward the *universal soul!*

CHAPTER XXXI

IN February Lucy and Helen, taking little Stephen with them, went to New York to meet Warrington on his return. Ellen, and this time at her own request, accompanied them. She had news of her own. Julius, the father of the motherless baby left by Ellen at Ashe in the care of Mom Belle Preston, was on the seas on his way home. The men of the 369th Regiment, Negro veterans, largely recruited from New York City, were due to reach port any day.

With them was Lieut. James Europe, and his now famous band. Of this band was Julius Buck; the kettle-drum on which he so lustily performed being one of the five presented by the French to the regiment, that had given good account of itself in Champagne, at Chateau Thierry, at the St. Mihiel salient, and in the Argonne. Ellen went to meet Julius, carrying with her the news of Sally's death.

Warrington came in ahead of the ship bringing the regiment. On the day that New York welcomed these colored soldiers home, the first veteran regiment of New York troops, white or colored, to return, he secured seats near the reviewing stand at 60th Street; and took the four, Helen, Lucy, Stephen and Ellen, to see the parade.

Thousands of black men and women and children lined the sidewalks, with similar thousands of their

white fellow creatures. Thousands of flags held aloft in their hands, fluttered; American flags, service flags, "Welcome Home" banners. Thousands of rattlesnakes, the emblem of the 369th, each coiled ready to strike, appeared amid these crowding thousands everywhere; in buttonholes, on hatbands, on banners.

Lucy, beside Ellen on the wooden seat, above the crowd, sat pale and silent. She recalled the pageants and parades of Fifth Avenue that she so recently had seen devoted to war. She thought of a prison camp in Belgium. And she prayed God that it had been possible that these cheering thousands here to-day might have gazed on a march up Fifth Avenue, not of the returning, the alive, but of the dead in this war.

She somewhere had seen it estimated as to the time this would take. She in fancy saw this host of the dead now. The British dead she saw start at daybreak, twenty abreast. Until sundown she saw them march, and the next day, and the next, and the next. For ten days the British dead pass in review. For eleven days more, the French dead file along this Avenue of The Allies. The Russians pass for five weeks more. Two months and a half, it takes, for the allied dead to pass. The enemy dead follow for six weeks. Four months in all, men killed in this war, pass steadily along Fifth Avenue, twenty abreast. For four months young men, dead before their time, go steadily by.

Young men! And the *old* men are where as the young dead file by? The *old* men sit the while in council, as is the way with these things; negotiating treaties, that in the nature of them are the forerunners of new wars wherein *young* men shall die! Could such a pageant of these young dead file by the thousands who at this moment stood here, lining the sidewalks of

Fifth Avenue, would they ever again permit *war,* as an instrument of *old* men's governments?

* * * * * *

She heard Ellen, the stoic, who sat here beside her, breathe hard. No march of death was this coming now up Fifth Avenue. These black men forming the 369th Infantry, led by their white Colonel walking at the head of his men in the face of these cheering thousands of New York's populace turned out to welcome them, were very much alive.

They were big men. They swung up the Avenue, their rows of bayonets glancing in the sun, dull-painted steel basins on their heads, with the easy precision of men, long masters of the technique of their calling; their step springy, with the lilt and swagger of men proud of themselves and their organization; their files never wavering for an instant at the sound of the plaudits, and the cheers along the way. The showers of cigarettes and of candy descending upon them as they marched, disturbed them not at all in their discipline; rarely did a man in the ranks give a sign of recognition of these tokens; only here a flash of white teeth; and there a broadened smile as promptly disappearing.

James Europe marched at the head with his band. Julius Buck of Ashe, Kentucky, with the roll and swagger of the returning hero indeed, and unaware of the news Ellen brought him, mightily beat his kettledrum.

Lucy turned to Ellen now. In ordinary passive, in general taciturn, the tall, old woman, who was nearer seventy than sixty, was on her feet. The lesser sorrow she brought was forgotten in the greater glory she beheld. The head of Ellen was up-flung; the tears that rained down her cheeks were tears of jubilation.

Ellen's faith in her race, that had been silent as it was watchful suddenly had flowered!

* * * * * *

Two days later the members of the 369th were mustered out. The situation for Ellen had its complications. She met these difficulties herself. Julius would not be permitted to come to the hotel to see her, but she had friends in New York City of her own color. It was arranged that he, coming in from camp, should proceed on uptown to a subway station in Harlem. She would meet him here, and they would go together to her friends. Her pride in the boy, and her misery at the news she brought him, alike were deep as they were wordless.

* * * * * *

Warrington, on this same day, shortly after one o'clock, came hurrying to Lucy and Helen at their hotel. Lucy met him with an early afternoon paper in her hand. She and Helen had the news he came to bring them. A scare head across the paper set forth the business:

RACE RIOT IN HARLEM

RETURNED NEGRO SOLDIER SHOT

SAID TO BE FROM ASHE, KENTUCKY

Warrington knew the ropes; knew the procedures; knew where to go; and where to take Lucy. Helen went with her, leaving the child at the hotel with a maid. At the police station they heard the story; and were given an address where, so they were told, they would find Ellen with her friends. It was borne in on

Lucy that were the situation reversed, Ellen would know the address of Lucy's friends. Ellen had been part with her in her every great and small experience of joy and of sorrow in her life; had stood by her and with her; the pages of Lucy's life open to her.

And what in her turn did she know of Ellen's experiences? Of Ellen's joys and sorrows? She did not know even the *names* of these, Ellen's friends. She knew nothing of Ellen's views; of her thoughts on any subject; of her thoughts for that matter, about Lucy Wing herself.

It was a story brief enough. Lucy as she heard it rehearsed at the police station, could see it all. The details she read afterward in the papers. Julius, banjo-king of jazz-players; member of Lieut. Europe's band; twenty-four years old, full of swagger, full of strut, was jostled by a white man as he and his aunt emerged from the subway onto the sidewalk, and had retaliated.

"Run along, now," said Julius, as reported. "There's your way, and this is mine."

The white man struck Julius who struck back. The mulatto boy was in his uniform; he wore stripes of two sorts, for service, and for wounds; and he wore a medal. His confidence in these as his credentials apparently was great, as doubtless was his faith in that welcome of two days since, when he and his companions swung up Fifth Avenue. His teeth flashed as he faced about, greeting the policeman who here appeared; "a coon smile, all teeth and good humor," as a witness said.

"Ain't no man going to lay hands on this soldier, what's me, this day," he claimed. A dozen of his race upsprung as by magic agreed with him. They were outnumbered by a crowd of whites as quickly gathered.

The noon paper put it tersely: "The Negro soldier was killed by a pistol shot through the heart, at the hands of an unknown person, one of a crowd of whites come to the assistance of the policeman who was trying to arrest him."

Lucy's lips, as her eyes lifted to Warrington's, and then to Helen's, at the close of the story, moved stiffly.

"We smile at them when they please us; we shoot them down, or lynch them, when they displease us. *Yellow,* YELLOW, YELLOW! My race and color are *yellow!* Yellow as Germany when she struck at smaller, weaker Belgium!"

* * * * * *

They went in search of Ellen. They found her in an apartment house, creditable and pleasing. A Negro girl in a uniform took them up in an elevator. A Negro woman opened the door to them, herself courteous and comely. She wore a black dress, and a service pin with two citations.

She ushered them into a room where they found Ellen. It was a pleasant room flooded with the afternoon February sun, scrupulously in order, and furnished with a cheerful rug, upholstered chairs and sofa, a piano, a shelf of books, a canary in a cage, and a fern in a pot on the window sill.

Ellen was standing in the center of the room as they entered. Her decent black hat was on a chair near by. Her head thus bare alike of hat or the accustomed square of muslin, one saw as it were for the first time, that the frost of years had more than touched her hair.

Her eyes lifted and she looked at Lucy, at Helen, at Warrington, dully. The ordinary copper hue of her face with its high cheek-bones, had given place to a grayish pallor, ashy and deathlike; her lips were blue.

The boy had been shot down at her feet, within a few short moments of her meeting him, and it was as though she and her wits were staggering beneath the enormity of the shock.

Somber these eyes were, and so stricken with the reproach of their poignant suffering, they might have been not those of one tall and straight old Negro woman; but of her race.

She spoke in a monotonous voice: "I've money of my own laid away; there's the money in the bank that ol' Miss left me; I want to take *my boy* home."

* * * * * *

It was three days after Lucy, Helen, and Ellen reached Ashe, returned with Julius in his coffin, wearing his uniform, his stripes, and his medal, that Ellen had her stroke.

CHAPTER XXXII

LYDA LELEWEL went to and fro, from parlor to bedroom, and kitchen, directing the activities of two shabby men in overcoats and derby hats. As a price was fixed upon between these second-hand dealers and Lyda, each piece of furniture, or furnishing in turn, was removed by the men to their wagon at the curb below.

Andrey, returning from school, came into the half-denuded rooms and the confusion. His eyes, habitually grave and troubled, as they turned on his mother, betrayed alarm.

"Pack your clothes," she told him, "all of 'em. Put 'em in this suitcase."

To do this did not take the boy long; a second cheap suit, about outgrown; a second suit of underwear; stockings good and bad; some odds and ends; these were Andrey's possessions.

She tossed him a pair of roller skates and a necktie. "Put 'em in if you want 'em."

He put them in.

She banged on a table half a loaf of bread, some cold potatoes, and half a box of sardines. They sat down to their meal. The kitchen-safe now being emptied, it was set upon by the two men and carried out the door. When in time they carried out the kitchen table, the rooms were bare of everything but Lyda's trunk and Andrey's suitcase; and they returned no more.

Lyda, with an armful of clothes, her comb and brush, rouge pot, hand glass, and the rest of it, went into the cubby-hole called a bathroom. Andrey sat on his suitcase and waited. It was past mid-afternoon. He had learned long since to take his mother as he found her, there being days when she never spoke to him; days when he came from school to find her gone. He neither knew at such times where she was, nor when she would return. He got his breakfast always, and at other times for his meals, took what he found in the safe.

She emerged with her toilet made, her showy figure boldly outlined by her dress, and on her head a wide-brimmed hat with plumes. She put the garments she had taken off in her trunk, lowered the lid, and locked it. The empty room echoed to her footfalls. Almost at the moment the honk of a car came up from the street below.

She directed the boy: "Help the man bring my trunk down when I send him up. I paid the rent this morning. Turn the key in the door after you get your suitcase, and leave it downstairs as you come. I'll wait for you on the pavement."

These things in turn being done, he with his suitcase joined Lyda, the taxicab churning at the curb. And then the incredible happened. Taking Andrey's hand, and closing his fingers on some object that she pressed into his palm, Lyda spoke curtly:

"Tell her for me, since she took first your father from me, and then you, she can *have you*. Jake Hillman's ordered off to another store in the chain, and I'm off with him."

The door closed upon her with a bang, the car sprang forward, turned the corner and disappeared from the boy's unbelieving gaze.

And still he stood, planted on the curb, dazed with the shock; and still he gazed after the vanished cab.

It had rained during the day, a warm, mild March pour, but now had cleared; the sun, a glinting white ball, was descending in the drab west above the roofs, pallid through a blanket of city smoke and misty dampness. The boy opened his palm, and his gaze traveled to the object in it. It was a slip of pink paper, a trolley-ticket which as he brought it closer and examined it, he saw was punched at the station called Ashe.

He looked behind him at the house. Mrs. Duggan, from whom they rented, was an impeccable person, past middle-age, and she hated Lyda.

He had no money; had Lyda planned it so? He had this trolley ticket only, that she had put in his hand.

Where, he wondered, was his father? He had worshiped his father, had given him his love, his adoration, his loyalty; where was he now? The hand closed slowly, closed painfully and despairingly on the bit of paper; and a burning red of humiliation upwelled from neck and then throat, and suffused the sensitive, small face. He thought of the near-by unfenced lumber yard that overlooked the murky water of the creek that wound past mill and factory. He would sit here among the piles of stacked planks, and think what of himself, and for himself, he could do.

It was night when the flashing lantern of the yard watchman drove him back to the streets. He wandered here until a drizzling rain descended, and his courage failed him.

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It was past eleven that night when Andrey appeared at Ashe. Kitty McKane and Lucy came down themselves to answer the bell. The light from the hall

fell on him, a small figure standing beyond the doorsill. Haggard about the mouth, and desperate as to the eyes, he lifted his face to the two women. Rain gleamed on his suitcase, and on his face. There was a brisk downpour, and his clothes were soaked. He explained.

"My mother sold our things and went off."

He hesitated, then went on, repeating those terrible final words flung back at him by Lyda, his mother, as she entered the cab.

"She said if Eugene didn't feel a father to me, she didn't see why she should feel a mother. That it might have been different if I were like other children; but I wasn't."

CHAPTER XXXIII

IT was December, 1920, a year and more later. Warrington Adams sat with a letter from Lucy in his hand. It was open, but as yet unread.

He was thinking of her as he last had seen her, some months ago here in New York. He had perceived a woman coming toward him along the street, slim and elegant, leading a child, a boy of five, straight and handsome. It was Lucy, in his eyes beautiful as never would be any other woman. Perceiving him as she approached, she smiled in welcome, her eyes deep and sweet.

He had read her eyes ere this; and through these, her heart; and *knew,* and bowed his head. Whatever in the years ahead, Time with its healing had for her, there was no place for him beyond that now held. Oh, lover, lover that he was! that this should come to him! The want of her; the cruel, terrible want of her forever here; and forever unconfessed.

Yet he knew himself, and knew that he could do it. He knew that he would love on; satisfying himself from time to time through contact with her; refreshed with a look on her as the parched earth is refreshed with the dew. His friendship should be useful to her as he could make it; full of tranquillity; wise with considered counsel and watchings. No betrayal should there be ever of his madness; of his beating pulses in his heaving breast.

He knew the direction of her thoughts as regarded him, as though she had voiced them. The pinions on which her fancy soared in his behalf were wings lent by her affection for him; the direction of her impulse, born of the intensity of her own desire. She saw in this companion swinging along the street beside her on his crutch, the arriving great editor, arisen for the need of the day and the hour, as *she read these.* She saw him as ultimately one of the brains behind the news of each day which shall strive to make the world smaller by making its relations closer; saw him as a factor in a directing energy toward a rational internationalization of thought that in her belief, far more than treaties, shall bring about world understanding and prevent war.

And he knew, great lover of one woman, how *she,* seen through his conviction as to the world's unchanging need, appeared to him. He knew that he, through the years ahead, saw her as *Woman,* eternal and abiding; bigger in herself than through any perquisites that may be added to her; stable, yearning, pitiful, protecting.

Her gaze as he was aware as they walked along, was fondly on him. His eyes were withdrawn from her, and looked afar. Deep in them were all the pain and the unmeasured questionings of life; but over and above these was a grimness, a will to endure; to which all else in the man was the servant, and not the master.

He once, in the days of her earlier stress, had answered a challenging question put by her to him:

"No," he had admitted, "I don't think there are overly many of us who are too happy."

"Then why do we keep on? Why do we each try at doing our part? Why do you yourself, Warrington?

Who have no great illusions, nor deceive yourself as to this fact? Why do *you* keep on?"

"I reckon with us all it's to keep the record straight if for no other reason, Lucy."

* * * * * *

He turned to the letter in his hand, and began to read:

DEAR WARRINGTON:

November 2, 1920, is a month now come and gone; we women in these United States as a whole, have cast our first electoral vote, and the situation with some of us has not been without its humorous aspect. But I will come back to this claim about the humor presently.

For first, oh, Warrington, I must tell you again, as in this last year and more, I've told you before: Life here at Ashe in my house and home that I do so love, has lost its grace, its charm; that, alas, I so have taken for granted.

I am aghast because I am so helpless to prevent this; or to remedy it. Is it another, a lesser manifestation of the general chaos, the collapse of older systems, that since the war we are everywhere seeing?

I have not a servant in the house that I ever had before. Thomas Harris and Viola, his wife, and Mom Belle Preston, left me a year ago, retiring from service. Ellen and Jerry and little Julius live now in a cottage of their own with its acre of ground.

On the outside I still have Henry as chauffeur; and Jerry comes to me by the day, arriving at eight, and leaving at five.

What am I and mine to him now, this arrangement seems to say? His part is to give me eight hours' work for eight hours' pay, and this being done, to return to his own life, and his own affairs.

A half-grown Negro girl, a neighbor's daughter, looks after and does for Ellen and the child, who now is three years old. Ellen has had her second stroke, and is failing generally; held to life, so the doctors say, by her passionate devotion to this child

of Julius, the nephew. She has four thousand dollars in bank; one thousand of this, and her cottage and its acre of ground, were left her by grandmother. Her jealous triumph is that she has these to leave to the child.

With this withdrawal of the two, Jerry and Ellen, from beneath my roof to a roof of their own, the life of their own race and its affairs, as with Thomas and Viola, seemed to close in upon them, and engulf them in its sweep and current. I became secondary with them overnight, almost it seemed, and in my own eyes, a stranger to them.

I have in my kitchen a pleasant young colored woman who intends to leave me at Christmas. Her plans were laid to mature by this date when she came to me. She is to be a traveling state superintendent of colored Sunday schools. She is intelligent and well-mannered, and no doubt will make a success of her new work. I am an incident with her on her way to things of greater moment and desirability. I feel with her, and for her, and applaud her laudable ambitions.

But, as I have said, the grace of life for me is gone. My butler is a pale and reticent young colored man whose eye as he places my demi-tasse before me at dinner is on the clock. He hopes to catch the earliest trolley possible into the city where he is taking an evening course in stenography and typewriting. He plans at the conclusion of this course to enter the office of a local colored insurance company.

And I am nothing to any of them who, in my complacent security, thought I was so much. It could not have come to this had grandmother still been here. I am not willing to believe the ties between her and these colored members of her household were not real and enduring.

Is the fault ours that the affection of this lovable people is no longer ours? I'm afraid it is, Warrington. I cannot tell you how terrifying it is to me, until recently so secure within my fatuous blindness, to see the old bridges between us two peoples living here in the south together going down all about me, and the swift waters of separate interests racing between.

November 2d came and went. The day before the election

I had a message through Jerry from Ellen. She, Mom Belle Preston, and Viola, wanted to cast their votes; all three are old, the road from their three homes which are off the pike, is bad, and they looked to me to see they could get to Ashe, and do so. Like children still in that they looked to me for this, I loved them for it; and arranged that Henry should fetch the three in the car, and Jerry bring Ellen's wheeling chair ahead in my wagon.

You know how strongly I feel about the issue in the election; the League of Nations, as it seems to me, being the one thing to look to, out of the wreck of all that my Stephen supposed he gave his life for.

I did no electioneering among these colored women; I would have scorned to; I respect their loyalty. They saw in their first vote cast, a debt paid to that power that sixty years ago freed their race; and they as a race, and as individuals, invariably are loyal to an obligation that they recognize.

The light for them through their franchise, must come from within, if we would not have them exploited. Some day it will break for these Negro women, and it will be better for all concerned, white and black, republican and democrat, when that times comes; and the Negro woman sees that through party solidarity, her race does us all, white and black, alike wrong.

We mustered in front of the post office, I with an extra rug for Ellen's knees, as she sat in the wheeling chair, and also a thermos bottle of hot coffee for her, for the day was raw and cold, and she is very frail. My present young woman cook, and my young housemaid, were there too, and we all, Viola and Mom Belle included, were in line together.

I thought of grandmother and smiled to myself. Grandmother for forty years, gave herself, her time, brain, and fortune, to gain for us women what we exercised this day; primarily with her to the end that through enfranchised woman there should come about an end to armament, and so to war.

For the first time in the history of any treaty drawn up for the world, as you and I have remarked on, in the treaty of Versailles there is full recognition of the black race; Negro

representatives from Haiti and Liberia signing it, the voice of the Negro through these two plenipotentiaries, being heard for the first time in a congress of nations; a parliament where the Negro may present any matter "within the sphere of action of The League, or affecting the peace of the world." Also the Versailles treaty recognizes "racial and popular rights to the freedom of self-government."

I smiled, and thought of grandmother, as I told you just now, Warrington, and this is why:

I saw Ellen safely in the booth first; then followed her; myself succeeded by Viola, Mom Belle, and then by Mary, my modern and intelligent young colored woman cook; the colored housemaid completing the line. I cast my one vote for The League of Nations; and they cast their five votes against it! Grandmother in the try-out was hoist by her own petard!

These colored women were here in force, old and young and middle-aged; quiet determination in their faces to accomplish what they came for. I was conscious of a new spirit among them, a new carriage of themselves, as it were inwardly and outwardly. Race consciousness with them has come, and a race solidarity.

The genie has escaped from the bottle; do not let us believe that we through the desire to have it so, can put this spirit of the black race back again. Do not let us believe that we, if we could, would have it back again. Better that we consider the situation as it is, and how, with justice to all, it shall be met. That we ask of ourselves, and of history, if a race no longer in spirit a subject race, can exist within another; another that perforce in blood, is and must be, an alien race? Better that we and they wonder, with our eyes toward Africa, if a hegira of a nature never before contemplated be possible.

* * * * * * *

Thank you, Warrington, for meeting Andrey at his station and getting him across town, and started safely home here to Stephen and Kitty and me, for Thanksgiving. No doubt it seemed to you unreasonable and even foolish of me to have him

come for these few days. But the boy is peculiar, as you know, and singularly unhappy and lonely.

I do not remember if I told you that he seems irrevocably cut off, through his earlier training by Eugene, from the spiritual reassurance that the average child has through a belief in a Divine Power.

The first Sunday that Andrey was with us here at Ashe, a year and a half ago, I took it for granted that he would go across the road to church with little Stephen and me, with really no thought beyond the idea of including him in our movements.

Accompanying us on the walk through the woodland, and across the road, he stopped at the church door. He was very thin then, his face so pallid as to appear to be gray, and I think he had the most poignantly unhappy eyes I ever saw in human creature's face. He spoke briefly.

"There's nothing *here* for me."

I've never urged him since. He is reasonable, biddable and fair. What he gets out of his chapel attendance at school, and the spiritual oversight in general there, I can't say. The head of the school and his teachers know his story, and he knows that they do.

Only when a boy at the school suffers in some sense that to Andrey seems a *worldly* disqualification,—owes his presence there, say, to a scholarship—will Andrey respond to any advances; and make any effort toward what should be, for him, permanent friendships. I live to tell Eugene Lelewel if ever he returns, that he in no sense, was honest with his son.

He said he existed to knock down the barriers between nations, through removing these barriers in the minds of the children of the proletariat. He put up as many barriers as ever he removed in Andrey's mind; he erected partitions of his own there; between man and God; between class and class; between parents and child. I hope I yet may tell him so.

I told you at the start of Andrey's distress of mind over what he piteously feels is the obligation. He calls it *the debt.* I could not then, nor can I altogether yet, make him see that I

am the original debtor. And further that affection between free souls knows no debt.

"You have gifts of the mind, Andrey, and must look to these to best meet your part in life," I tell him. "For you and me alike not to see this, would be stupid; and taking it as our working proposition, put it across."

He is very tragic. From the start he said:

"I have no mother; but my father will come for me, and he will make it right."

I showed him finally, because it seemed to me I ought, that his father, like the father of my little Stephen, may have paid with his life in his turn for his especial political faith. He agrees now as to the chances of this. How strange it is! Who am I, unproven myself, and hunting for an outlet, to have upon my hands this gifted and tragic Slav boy?

He spoke suddenly to me while here at Thanksgiving. It shows where his thoughts continually are.

"But you *do* believe that my father if alive, will come for me?"

"Andrey," I said, "let us both believe it."

* * * * * * *

I seem purposeless to myself, Warrington. Am I to live on here at Ashe, in an atmosphere of comfort, my most gigantic effort being the achieving of the obvious duties of each succeeding day?

Is it enough that I preserve to little Stephen a home, and certain of the traditions which, if we believe in America and a popular government at all, he has a right to? Traditions come down to us, that you and I and his father have seen working, and that you and I believe will work still?

I long for effort; long for the driving and impelling force of some great necessity. Yet I'm much too humble to believe, or to pretend, that I'm capable in myself of any especial thing, either through training, or through any natural gifts.

That I am of my day, probably is the explanation; for I am confessing to you that I am hideously restless; am conscious

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within myself of a mighty and a sweeping, outward and onward surge!

Is it, or is it not, a necessary part to a positive end, that some women at this time of flux and flow *stay put?* Do not be dismayed that I fear to hear you say to me, "Yes." An answer that will fall like a knell on the ears of my panting, straining soul.

And will I heed it? And more, *should* I heed it?

LUCY.

(1)

THE END

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